

CEO in 10/6 prr. NBC challenges this notion. Responds Betty Hudson, vp-corp & media rels:

"NBC's policy on this is clear, and we've communicated it to Grace and others. We don't accept advertisements that advocate views on a controversial issue of public importance because:

"1. These issues are better covered in news & public affairs programs, by journalists who have a professional commitment to objectivity and no stake in the outcome of the debate.

"2. With issue advertising, there is a danger that those with the most money to spend on broadcast time could set the agenda of tv discussion of important public questions.

"3. Accepting paid messages could obligate NBC under the FCC's 'fairness doctrine' to give an unforeseeable amount of free time for presentation of opposing viewpoints. The resulting loss of air time & revenues could undermine our regular news service & program schedule.

"Our policy on issue advertising does not apply to paid political announcements. Also, we do accept institutional or "image" ads as long as they don't take sides on a controversial issue of public importance.

"The application of NBC's issue-advertising policy, as with any general set of guidelines, is done on a case-by-case basis, considering the particularities of each advertisement under review. This is not 'pot luck.' We think our judgments have been reasonable and consistent, and as accommodating to advertisers as possible within the bounds of the policy."

#### ITEM OF INTEREST TO PRACTITIONERS

More than 200 newspapers across the nation accept Op-Ed pieces. New directory, "National Survey of Newspaper Op-Ed Pages," identifies them. Gives editorial contact names & addresses, specific comments & guidelines from the Op-Ed editor of each paper. Also lists payment rates, desired length, copyrighting policies, frequency of appearance & whether contributors must live within the paper's circulation areas. Explains a) how best to market a message to this medium, b) territorial exclusivity requirements, c) submission practices. (\$15 + \$2 postage & handling from Communication Creativity, P.O. Box 213, Saguache, Colo. 81149)

#### WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

**ELECTED.** Arthur W. Page Society 1987 officers: president, Jean Handley (vp, personnel & corp rels, Southern New England Telephone, New Haven); vp, Ken Clark (vp-corp comms, Duke

Power, Charlotte); sec'y, Lucie Adam (vp & partner of corp comms, Korn/Ferry Int'l, NYC); treas, Robert Ehinger (former vp, contributions & org'n planning, AT&T, NYC).

#### PRSA'S ETHICS CODE

...and its bylaws & policies will be studied by a Task Force on Procedures, appointed by PRSA's board of directors. Will recommend changes it determines are necessary to meet Society's needs & mission. Betsy Ann Plank (ass't vp, corp comms, Illinois Bell, Chi) will lead 5-member Task Force. Other members: Chester Burger (Chester Burger & Co, NYC), J. Kenneth Clark (vp-corp comm, Duke Power, Charlotte) H.J. (Jerry) Dalton Jr (mgr corp comm, LTV Corp, Dallas), Jay Rockey (The Rockey Co, Seattle). Findings will be presented to PRSA Assembly, Nov 8.

# pr reporter

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#### ANNUAL ORGANIZATIONWIDE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN, BUILT FROM THE BOTTOM UP, PROVIDES PG&E WITH ONE CLEAR VOICE OUTREACH FOR 30,000 EMPLOYEES

"Communication is a job for all 30,000 of us as PG&E employees," explains Pacific Gas & Electric's Corporate Communications Plan. Yearly planning process, begun in '82, provides a "strategic approach to communications in support of the company's goals & programs," Claude Poncelet, mgr, comms planning dep't, told prr.

Planning process is done thru a participatory approach -- "grassroots up." Includes a broad base of individuals to 1) "get a clear sense of needs, particularly from our operating divisions," and 2) "educate employees about the importance of consistent & well-thought-out communications. Involving people from thruout the organization raises their awareness of communication's importance."

**ONE CLEAR VOICE.** 10-pg document is distributed widely thruout the company to sr & middle mgmt and all groups who have involvement in communications. Process makes communications more "focused, directed & consistent." This is becoming even more important as PG&E decentralizes. "With a common plan like this for headquarters & the 6 decentralized departments, we will all be marching to the same tune."

**PROACTIVE.** Process results in detailed action plans for all groups within corporate communications. "Even tho there is a lot of 'pr du jour' (pr work one cannot anticipate or plan for) it's beneficial to proactively plan programs starting with clear objectives -- what we're trying to achieve, what messages we want to get across -- then design a program for the year that can be implemented regardless of the outside environment. This makes the overall communication effort more effective. Rather than being only reactive to what's happening out there on a day-to-day basis, this helps us focus and put more attention on what we can do proactively."

**MEASUREMENT SYSTEM.** '87 plan will take a step forward, "making it even more effective" by putting in place a more thorough measurement system. "The action plans that come out of this annual planning process will be the basis for quarterly

Poncelet's advice to others undertaking a similar project:

1. Use a participatory approach. "Make sure you involve not only communicators, but also line people who aren't responsible for communications but have a sense of the company's publics and how you can best support their functions."

2. Use a great deal of patience & perseverance. "This is true of any planning process. There is a constant tension between people who carry out actions on a day-to-day basis, and planners who look at objectives. That's probably where we've had the most difficulty."



reporting of senior management on progress toward achieving objectives and, hence, corporate goals." (Compare Chrysler's mission-oriented plan reported in last week's issue.)

ORGANIZATION. Poncelet's dep't, communication planning, oversees the corporate communications planning process. It centralizes the planning function along with opinion research & issues management into one area. This is further evidence that present day pr staff plans & facilitates an organization's relationships -- it doesn't try to "handle" everything themselves. Most communications inevitably occur between employees & customers, neighbors, acquaintances, etc.

"FAILED NEGOTIATIONS MAY PRODUCE ANYTHING FROM MINOR INCONVENIENCES TO NUCLEAR HOLOCAUST"; 5 STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL NEGOTIATIONS

Max Bazerman of Northwestern's biz school (Evanston, Ill.) has studied why negotiations fail, concentrating on the biases

that can undermine them. He offered Psychology Today these 5 common mistakes & strategies for avoiding them:

1. "Fixed Pie" Bias. Assumption that there is only a fixed amount of profit or gain in what is being negotiated and that in order for them to win something, the other must lose it. Strategy: Work out an integrative trade off where both sides get what's most important to each.

2. Winner's Curse. When one side knows something the other doesn't and can use the info to selectively accept or reject an offer. Expressed humorously by Groucho Marx when he said he didn't care to belong to any club that would accept him as a member. Club's willingness to accept him suggested its standards were so low it wasn't worth joining. Strategy: Look at a situation from the opponent's standpoint; balance the quality of information.

3. Escalating Conflict: Both sides often start with extreme demands, expecting to compromise somewhere in the middle. But they get caught up in the struggle, feel they have too much time, money & ego invested to back off. They take a hard line instead of adopting a conciliatory or problemsolving approach. Strategy: Be aware of a tendency to justify past actions. Constantly evaluate the costs & benefits of continuing along the same lines. Avoid pushing opponents into a corner, getting them angry or otherwise making them feel they can't afford to give up the struggle.

DATA: "IS" OR "ARE"??  
Debate over the singular vs. plural use of "data" goes on. Is "data are" pretentious? "Data is" uneducated? Carter Daniel (UVA) says "it is not true that people used to say 'data are' but now debase their language by saying 'data is'.... People always had thought of 'data' as a collection of figures, just like 'information,' and thus used it in the singular."  
Some scholars, objecting to the use of a Latin plural as an English singular, invented the word "datum." But, says Daniel, "Latin is Latin, and its rules don't apply to English at all."  
Whether it's "data is" or "data are" is irrelevant. According to Daniels in Rutgers' newsletter for the biz comty, consistency is the key. Some of the data are incomplete and much of the data is incomplete. Both are correct.

4. Overconfidence: People are consistently overconfident of the reasonableness of their position & of the likelihood that an objective 3rd party will agree with them. This reduces the incentive to compromise. Studies show negotiators who are appropriately confident are consistently more willing to compromise and more successful in negotiations than their overconfident fellows. Strategy: Try to obtain objective assessments from outside experts to temper overconfidence & overestimation.

5. Framing Negotiations: There are important differences in how people respond to problems depending on whether they are framed in terms of losses or gains. People who frame outcomes in terms of gains or profit are more willing to make concessions to obtain the sure outcome available in a negotiated settlement. In contrast, negotiators who think in terms of losses or costs are more likely to take the risk-seeking action of holding out and possibly losing all in an attempt to force further concessions from their opponent. Strategy: Present info in a way that leads the opposition to see what they have to gain from a risk-free settlement. Third parties, trying to get others to compromise, should frame suggestions in ways that show what both sides will gain from a settlement.

MORE ON IACOCCA: WHEN CEO BECOMES PUBLIC PERSONAGE CAN BE RISKY IF GOES TOO FAR

"Public perception that Lee Iacocca ought to be president sells cars & trucks," Jim Tolley, vp-pa, Chrysler, told pr. "From that point of view it's good for the company." But what if he left the company -- to run for office or retire?

ONE-MAN COMPANY? "We appear to be because Iacocca is so much in the forefront." Iacocca is 62. If he retires at 65, what will happen to Chrysler? Conundrum: Does a celebrated CEO, whose popularity adds dollars to the bottom line, become a liability at some point?

Tolley says Iacocca & board of directors have it under control. "Immediately behind Iacocca are 5 execs qualified to become CEO. You don't know their names simply because of the way Lee has dominated the scene."

They can't compete for public attention with him now, so Tolley's strategy is: 1) get the Detroit media thoroughly acquainted with them, 2) expose them as often as possible to financial analysts, 3) make sure the big block shareholders know them well. A classic targeted campaign.

A corollary question is whether the CEO is effective appearing in ads. It's working for Iacocca, and some say it's only because of his intriguing background -- first generation American, celebrated fight with Henry Ford II, unusual name. But it also worked for Victor Kiam of Remington.

TV ISSUE ADS NOT "POT LUCK" SAYS NBC REBUTTING PETER GRACE

CEO J. Peter Grace berates the "controversy" test given issue ads. "If a network determines an ad is too opinionated, it will reject it.

The network makes this judgment subjectively. It's pot luck," says W.R. Grace's

"Most people don't know if Lee Iacocca is a democrat or a republican. As long as there's no partisanship, both democrats & republicans will buy our products. If he were to declare that he is one or the other, we would then run the risk of losing a lot of customers."