

Eyecatching mailer communicates firm's move visually. Comicbook-like drawings of feet in motion...all headed in the same direction characterize this 20x5 1/2", 4-fold, b&w piece. 3 panels show feet getting closer till they arrive at the last 2 panels -- cartoon of a man with his feet on his desk (& holes in his soles) saying, "We've moved." PR firm's name, address & phone occupies the large white space beneath his feet. (For copy, write Gannon Communications, 15 Salt Creek Lane, Ste.322, Hinsdale, Ill. 60521.)

Vol.29 No.15
April 14, 1986

| "PUBLIC RELATIONS" TITLE PROMOTED | NON-PR EXECS ALSO PROMOTED |
|---|---|
| <p>With exec cmte approval, Paul Mitchell's title is being changed from vp corp afrs to vp pr, at Carl Karcher Enterprises (Anaheim). Dept's operations remain unchanged.</p> <p>"Over the years we've been coming up with all kinds of fancy titles for the umbrella of knowledge & talent under which most of us operate, which is really public relations. I think we've let a lot of other people cajole us into avoiding the use of the name of our chosen field and I believe we've weakened the name and the field by yielding to these pressures. Public relations is a great, honorable & powerful profession and I think those of us practicing it should identify more directly with the name," says Mitchell in a news release publicly pronouncing the change.</p> | <p>Throw back... or ongoing trend? When a public relations pro leaves a position, mgmt fills the post with someone outside the profession. Jerry Griffin, founding director of corp comms & a 26-yr employee with Louisiana-Pacific Corp (Portland, Ore), is leaving May 1 to start his own firm. He's being replaced by 2 people: William Hebert, L-P's <u>controller-finance</u>, will handle investor relations responsibilities; Larry Campbell, recently retired <u>dir of engineering & construction</u> for Pacific Northwest Bell, will serve as acting dir corp comms!! If public relations is "soft" & unimportant, how come people from other fields are so anxious to take it over?</p> |

GENERAL MOTORS IS AGAIN A LEADER IN THE "LIBERAL ART" OF MANAGEMENT -- & ITS 2 KEYS ARE WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS; EXECS GET SEMINARS ON REASONS, BENEFITS, TECHNIQUES OF COMMUNICATION

Since reorganizing in early '84, GM has placed emphasis on the creativity & ability of its employees. Its model for building organizational trust, called Trust Triangles (pr 6/10/85), and its use of interactive videodisc technology to communicate with employees (pr 9/16/85) are 2 examples of this thrust. A third is so basic it should be copied by every organization: GM is giving day-long seminars, called "Communicating For Performance," to unit, plant & division mgrs plus sr execs. They are "the primary communicators, in terms of preferred sources of information, according to our surveys & fieldwork," Dan Koger, mgr comn, R&D for corp pr staff, told pr. And these are people with little or no previous communication training.

TEACHING CONCEPTS. Seminar explains communication via eight concepts:

1. Communication is a fundamental component of the business process.
2. It is a planned process.
3. Unit managers are the "key" communicators.
4. Comn system must be professionally managed.
5. Business issues must be clearly defined.
6. Media used must fit the issues.
7. Comn system must be adaptable to business changes.
8. The comn process must be sustained & continuous.

"Through our Quality of Work Life programs and our massive new emphasis on training, we are moving to become an organization that is committed to a set of shared values. In our manufacturing facilities, we are replacing confrontation with cooperation, and we are instructing people at all levels in the principles of conflict resolution."

-- CEO Roger Smith

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

ELECTED. Steve Baer, X-PRSA national treasurer & board member, named to complete the unexpired board term of the late Bill Lee, Jr. Baer is mgr of public & employee info, Southern California Gas, Los Angeles.

2nd vp, G. Irvin Lipp (pr mgr, petroleum & chemical field ops, Conoco, Houston); sec'y/treas, Sue Collier (dpr, St Mary's Hospital, Galveston).

REMINDER

Increase the value of your pr subscription. Save each issue in a binder and keep at your desk as a handy reference. 3-ring, blue binder with pr reporter identification is \$7 from pr.

Texas Public Relations Association's 1986 ofcers: pres, Wellington Osterloh, (corp dpr, Coastal Corp, Houston); 1st vp/pres elect, Helen Varner (instructor, comn dep't, Stephen F. Austin State Univ, Nacogdoches);

BEYOND THE NEWSLETTER. To emphasize communication's tie with business issues, GM's director of corporate strategic planning is one of seminar's three instructors. Other 2 are Koger and Roger D'Aprix (Towers, Perrin, Forster & Crosby). "We're trying to get them away from the newsletter phenomenon -- thinking that because they have a newsletter they're communicating." Seminar is "driven by the awareness that communication is a fundamental part of how you run a business."



USEFULNESS SUPPORTED. Since its inception last October, 8 presentations have been given. "We're averaging about 2 per month now." Response has been good. Tho mgrs are initially reluctant to go to seminar's off-site location -- hotel near Detroit -- "all have left satisfied." Evaluation form asks about material's usefulness. "On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being most useful, we've averaged between 8.5 & 9."

CEO SETS TONE. Commitment to leadership role -- & thus essentiality of communication -- starts at the top with CEO Roger Smith: "If we're going to take full advantage of the creativity of our people, we have to provide an environment in which it can flourish. That's why we are decentralizing authority and cultivating entrepreneurialism throughout the length & breadth of our company." Other useful comments that identify Smith's vision:

"Manager's materials are human talent, and their craft is their ability to organize that talent to fulfill their vision. They must be able to convey their vision in an inspiring & forceful way -- in other words, to lead. To do that, you need communication skills and a sensitivity to people. If you can't communicate in a clear, concise & humane way, you'll have a hard time staying in touch with your customers, conveying your organization's values to your employees, and helping everyone to see the connection between individual & corporate success."

"In this context, skills in communication and interpersonal relations are not merely a 'nice to have' managerial talent. They are the vehicles by which the organization's goals are conveyed to each individual. Without them, we could never gain our employees' support and commitment. And besides being important in themselves, that support and commitment are competitive, bottomline issues: they're absolutely essential to higher quality & productivity & lower cost."

"Interpersonal skills, for the effective manager, are nothing less than business fundamentals. Geniuses in finance or production processes aren't much good to us unless they can also understand people, treat them with dignity and courtesy, respect their opinions about the work they do, and appreciate their differences in age, gender and culture. And it almost goes without saying that employees are happiest and most productive when they are treated with these kinds of considerations."

"We do not get the levels of loyalty & performance that we need by asking people to work for a paycheck & benefits alone. Rather, employees need to see the worth & impact of what they do. They need to understand its place in the larger scheme of things. They need to be recognized for doing it well. And they need to be encouraged to be creative about doing it even better."

For copy of speech by Smith, "Management is a Liberal Art," write pr.

GM'S REORGANIZATION HAS RIPPLE EFFECT
CHANGING THE WAY BUSINESSES ARE MANAGED

2,500 GM suppliers have to change the way they do business to remain suppliers. Kingston-Warren (Newfields, NH) is one that accepted the challenge. Its pres, Herb Grant Jr, says GM's request is 1 of 3 converging forces that are changing the way businesses are managed:

1) Speak Up, Be Involved. People over 40 were raised to "do as they were told, don't rock the boat." How well they succeeded depended on how well they followed directions. "In 1946 this all changed. Dr. Spock told parents that it's

ok for kids to speak up. Schools changed, encouraging kids to express themselves." And the reward system changed. Money & security were replaced with being involved, being part of it. Average age of workers at K-W is 30. "They grew up under a different system than the older folks managing them. Managers must understand this."

2) "Enter Japan Incorporated" with quality circles, participative management on a grand scale. "Even tho we're still two times as productive, they've led us to believe they're miracle workers."

3) America changed the way it does business. On December 13, 1983, GM invited 150 of its suppliers to "Buick City" to talk about its future "just-in-time system." And how suppliers would help make it work -- or lose their contracts. GM committed \$300 million and 9,000 employees to the concept. Its 2,500 suppliers would be affected, rippling to affect their suppliers, etc, etc.

Work groups were begun by trial and error. "We stumbled on what works." K-W is now using what it learned at a new plant in Wytheville, Va.

To do business in the 90s. "If you can't play this way, you'll fail," predicts Grant. Role of the new manager is coordinator, facilitator, mentor. No longer is she or he the "boss." Work groups are the means.

New factory uses a "just-in-time" system, has all workers on full salary. Participative groups provide the work structure. Reward system is no longer based on how much product is produced. Instead, it uses a "pay for knowledge" system. Training program of levels has been designed which takes 4 years to complete. A worker who completes all levels is capable of doing anything within the factory.

Unusual aspect of the program is that training is being done from the bottom up. With the system so new, Grant is now waiting to see what new employee needs will arise. Pay, knowledge & ability to input are available. What will take their place in the employee's hierarchy of needs?

USEFUL ITEMS FOR PRACTITIONERS

"As you sift thru resumes of new graduates this spring look for winners of PRSSA's highest honor -- the Gold Key Award. It recognizes students who demonstrated outstanding academic excellence in public relations and leadership qualities in PRSSA. Only 63 students received the award last year. Student Society recently voted to raise the average grade level requirement from 3.0 to 3.4 -- making it even tougher to receive the honor.

"Men form opinions about a company largely from impersonal media -- news reports, articles, company advertising. Major source of women's judgments is personal contacts. At least, according to a survey of engineering students by Deutsch, Shea & Evans, published in Graduate Engineering. Survey also shows that, contrary to findings 2 yrs ago, women more than men are now more likely to be influenced by experiences with a company's products or services. For example: a) contacts with company people influence 61% of women, but only 50% of men; b) company advertising on tv, radio & mags influence 23% of men, but only 17% of women (note the low rating of advertising per se). (For copy, write pr.)