

Results. Dollars saved in excess paper & postage. Clearer writing & thinking.

¶Council of Better Business Bureaus, in cooperation with the Office of Consumer Affairs, US Dep't of Commerce, is sponsoring the 10th Annual Washington Forum, "Plain English for Better Business." To be held May 28 at the Twin Bridges Marriott Hotel, Arlington, Va. For more info contact: CBBB Foundation, 1515 Wilson Blvd, Arlington, Va. 22209; 703/276-0100.

UNUSUAL, PARED-DOWN CORPORATE HISTORIES ARE THE NOW WAY TO CELEBRATE CENTENNIALS

No hard-bound books this time but perhaps even more memorable & meaningful ways to get the idea across:

1. Upjohn (Kalamazoo, Mich) uses a press kit filled with stories & photos about the company's beginnings, the people involved in its growth, its farm begun during the depression to keep people employed (which now serves as a think tank on economic & employment matters -- The W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research). Calendar (displaying prize photos by employees) marks company's historical events. "Like the photos, significant events resulted from the creative efforts of Upjohn employees," says the calendar. Entire kit projects this belief.
2. Pacific Lighting (Los Angeles) celebrates with an annual report-style booklet. Purpose is to "give readers both a feeling of what Pacific Lighting is today and an insight into the values in which we believe, and which will guide the company as it begins its second century." Photos from the past as well as outstanding 4-color landscapes of places where PLC operates give a broad view. Chronological chart & text explain the history. Attractive. Interesting reading.
3. Reynolds Metals (Richmond, Va) divides its annual report into 2 volumes -- not to commemorate its centennial but aluminum's. Financial data occupies one volume. The other tells of the origin of the metal and Reynolds' innovations that have sparked the growth of a major industry. Both are embossed with company's logo, one in glossy aluminum ink. They're held together with a 5" wide aluminum foil band that announces "Celebrating 100 years of Aluminum." Classy.

USEFUL INFORMATION FOR PRACTITIONERS

¶Unusual day-long symposium on April 16 called Teksecom '86/East kicks off PRSA's Technology Section. "Multi-discipline, hi-tech event offers exposure to key technologies in chemistry, electronics, aerospace, genetics from a communications perspective," chrm Joel Strasser told prr. Event includes world-class scientists talking on 1) communicating biotechnology in the war against cancer; 2) interpreting studies of the origins of life; 3) environmental crises & concerns. Also, a tour & briefing of AT&T Bell Labs' pr operations; briefing of American Chemical Society's press operations at its nat'l convention in progress; NASA symposium on the industrialization of outer space. \$50 for Section mbrs; \$100 for PRSA mbrs; \$150 for others. Similar event is scheduled for the West Coast later this year. For more info, call Belle Sanders, PRSA, 212/826-1750.

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

AWARDS. Evelyn Eman (pres, Perception +, Colorado Springs) receives

The Mary Bock Women of Achievement Award in Public Relations from WICI/Denver chap.

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MONSANTO'S 3-MONTH ISSUE ANTICIPATION TEST CAMPAIGN, "GENETIC ENGINEERING: UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF CHANGE," EMPHASIZED PRE- & POST-RESEARCH FOR TRUSTWORTHY EVALUATION

Building public consent for new-tech is critical...or face uphill, expensive public issue battles similar to the nuclear power industry's. Monsanto, with a \$multi-million commitment to genetic engineering, knew public fear of the technology could escalate into a major issue -- and it expects to launch its first products from this science within 2 or 3 years.

Its Silver Anvil winning public education campaign aimed to 1) increase awareness of the idea, 2) educate key publics, 3) prevent critics from setting the agenda & 4) gain support for field testing genetic materials in general -- & Monsanto's involvement in particular.

A 3-month test was conducted in 2 cities -- Columbus, O. & Columbia, SC. Both are state capitals in conservative regions. Target publics were to be 1) community leaders, 2) teachers, 3) news media execs, 4) local & state gov't officials, 5) biz leaders, 6) future consumers.

¶Research. Prior to the campaign, 300 people in each city were surveyed to obtain a baseline against which to measure the campaign's effectiveness in a scientifically valid, quantitative way. Message strategies were tested in focus groups held in an East Coast city where Monsanto is not a major presence.

¶Endorsements from local science museums & others helped overcome the problem of being an "outsider."

¶Interactive science exhibit on genetic engineering ran for 3 weeks in each city -- at the Center of Science & Industry in Columbus, at a shopping mall in Columbia. Astronaut Charles Walker opened the exhibit in both cities by conducting media interviews, giving away copies of a Monsanto movie on genetic engineering to local schools, hosting an evening reception for opinion leaders. Portions of the movie were used by tv stations to supplement their coverage of the campaign.

¶News conference/media tour was the kickoff. Senior Monsanto scientists explained the new-tech. News kit featuring "news tip sheet" on research being conducted in that state was the major comm tool. 65 articles were generated.

Company saw 2 specific problems:
1) marketplace might not accept genetically-engineered products;
2) customers might not accept Monsanto's entries because its name has not been associated with advanced technology. Another challenge for the pr dep't & counsel Fleishman-Hillard was that consumers had to be educated about products that do not yet exist.

¶Direct mailing of part of the news kit was made to 500 opinion leaders in each city, all legislators & state officials.

¶Results of an opinion poll of 200 top biz execs on the economic potential of genetic engineering were recorded in a brochure, mailed to 1,000 opinion leaders, biz execs & legislators in each state.

¶Print & tv ads on the benefits of biotech supplemented pr activities.

Follow Up Survey Results ¶Awareness that Monsanto is a leader in biotechnology rose from 9% to 25% in Columbus, 7% to 39% in Columbia.

¶Public awareness that biotechnology will have major benefits in agriculture increased.

¶Opposition to field testing genetically engineered bacteria dropped (from 27% to 21% in Columbus, 25% to 14% in Columbia).

¶More people were willing to allow Monsanto -- compared to its primary competitors -- to field test genetically engineered products.

¶Legislators & city officials publicly supported Monsanto's biotechnology initiative and expressed their interest in furthering the science in their states.

NOT BIAS BUT COMPLEX SOCIALIZING PROCESS PUTS PR WOMEN IN VELVET GHETTO, FINDS IABC FEMINIZATION STUDY

statistics are affecting the profession and the women in it, finds "The Velvet Ghetto: The Impact of the Increasing Percentage of Women in Public Relations and Business Communication," a study by IABC Foundation.

Women have difficulty moving into management. They are filling the role of communication "technician" instead. Result is women are paid less. Danger for the profession is that all practitioners will be stereotyped as technicians & be prevented from reaching mgmt via public relations or corporate communications -- if that is their goal, rather than being career pr professionals.

One woman, a former PRSA pres, worries that this feminization may be seen by men "as an opportunity to put public relations down a notch in the corporate hierarchy." It may be seen as "a position you can get rid of...an area that could be done better by someone at the top level, somebody who isn't in our profession."

Two assumptions -- 1) women aren't aggressive enough, 2) work is a job, not a career -- were tested on students at 8 universities. Psychological tests reveal male & female students are equally assertive -- almost off the high end of the chart. Men, however, score significantly higher in orientation toward a career. Women have jobs; men have careers.

33 winning entries will receive Silver Anvils this year. Earning 4 is Golin/Harris Communications. Double winners are Sara Lee Corp, Monsanto, Carl Byoir & Assocs, Richard Weiner, Inc. A record 440 cases were submitted. Summary statements of the 33 winners will be available in May. (\$12 mbrs, \$17 nonmbrs, prepaid to PRSA, 845 3rd Ave, NYC 10022)

Analyzing the profession's gender-switch as it occurs reveals where negative impacts can be halted. Some suggestions:

1. Improve the status of the profession. To begin with, management needs education on the impact of public relations on organizations, and the role of practitioners -- whether male or female.

2. Work with students. Improve respect for pr as a major for the better students, male & female alike.

3. Increase awareness that there is a problem. Women should know the earnings of men so they can enter negotiations with a firmer concept of their own worth. Also suggested: workshops on negotiation skills & mentoring.

"There is not a conscious bias or discrimination operating against women, but rather a complex socializing process," concludes the report. (\$25 from IABC Foundation, 870 Market St, Ste.940, SF 94102; 415/433-3400)

Women also surfaced who were "Queen Bees," whose own success convinced them there was no problem. One communicator advised other women not to "waste any time or energy thinking about what's different about women in this field. And don't look under the bed at night to see if anybody discriminated against you today. The field is too demanding and too challenging and you don't have that kind of time to waste. The women's issue just has no role in professional success."

THE SECRETARY HAS LAID DOWN THE LAW! THE SECRETARY OF COMMERCE, THAT IS, AND THE LAW IS PLAIN ENGLISH

emphasis on Plain English. Use no more words than effective expression requires." So reads the introduction to US Dep't of Commerce Sec'y Malcolm Baldrige's document on writing style.

Since taking office in '81, he has enforced Plain English in his office. In addition to 1-pg limits on press releases & letters, he relies on these techniques to change behavior:

1. Machines that edit. Computer recognizes Baldrige's list of "hit words," such as "input," "utilize" & "effectuate," and replaces them with "XXXXX."

2. Outside consultant uses dramatic flair to teach Plain English to all employees. One method includes leading 500 people in a cathartic group edit.

3. Peer reinforcement. Employees catch each other in the halls to correct wrong usage. It's not uncommon to hear, "So-and-so's using 'maximize' again, and I want him to stop it."

Dr. Thomas Murawski, retired Air Force lieutenant colonel who taught English to cadets and now consults on Plain English, dates much of the interest in it -- in private corporation, at least -- to the late 1970s when a new chrm of Dana Corp publicly burned a 22-inch stack of corp manuals and replaced them with a 1-page typed statement of corporate philosophy.