

2. What are the trade-offs you'll accept? How statistically accurate must the data be? Does it matter whether 25% or 35% of the sample dislikes your organization? If that many dislike you, what does a 10% variation matter? Or do you need to know that 26.7% dislike your org'n intensely? A firmer number requires a larger sample and costs more.

3. How much of the research do you want to do in-house? Do you have the capability? The expertise?

4. If you're hiring a research firm, do they focus on you or themselves? A good firm will recommend against bad research -- will send you home to think about what you want.

5. Is there a particular methodology (phone, mail, intercept) that you want to use? Remember, mail is the least expensive and lowest response getter.

6. What is your timetable? Is it flexible? Have you allowed a realistic amount of time for pretesting?

7. What are your budget limitations?

8. What professional services are you getting? Get it in writing.

9. Who will own the rights to the data when the research is done?

10. What will they do with the "don't know" responses?

11. Will there be a "don't care" category for responses?

12. What will they do with the call backs -- those not reached on the first try?

13. To keep intercept interviews random, will they stop every 5th person who fits the criteria?

14. Will the wording of your questionnaire offend people?

15. Who will write the results? The same senior person who set up the questionnaire?

16. Will the report be understandable? Supported by responses? Will it recommend action?

17. Be critical of interpretation. Remember, judgment goes back as far as the person entering the data into the computer. No research is bulletproof. It all involves judgment.

18. Don't get hung-up on precision & quantity of data. Be wary of reports with too many numbers.

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

HONORS. David Ferguson (sr consultant, Hill & Knowlton) will receive Distinguished Service Award from Chi/PRSA.

Long Beach as distinguished visiting lecturer & head of pr sequence... Stephen Baer joins Manning, Selvage and Lee (LA) as vp.

PEOPLE. Frank Wylie joins Cal State-

pr reporter

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"ISSUES MANAGEMENT HAS CHANGED FUNDAMENTALLY OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS IT'S TIME WE QUIT THE TERM," ARGUES BRIAN MILTON OF BELL CANADA; NEED NOW IS AN INTERNAL NETWORK TO ACCOMMODATE CHANGE AS A WAY OF LIFE

Organizations responding to a competitive environment have 2 ways to go: 1) "live in a permanent state of crisis"; 2) "organize & plan for change as a way of life." "There lies the rub with the original centralized, staff-run, issues management system. It was established to get away from (constant crisis) but it was never expected that organizations would be gearing up to anticipate & manage change as a way of life," explains Milton.

Problem lay in traditional management assumption, "enshrined in practice," that change is an aberration. "That was hard medicine and most organizations resisted it. Nevertheless, the bell was tolling for rational management and out of this came the new war cry captured in a buzz word -- strategic management. Issues management, where it's a success, has been absorbed within the larger challenge of strategic management."

Key Differences Of The New Issues Mgmt 1) Focus on the total environment.

"There's a new recognition that one can't parcel out the environment into neat academic slots." 2) Marshall the full range of internal talent. "It's no longer a special profession."

3) Shift away from a separate staff group. "More of a networking organization; less of a corporate staff, top-down approach." 4) Move into strategic as opposed to tactical posture.

What's Needed To Succeed

A. Revised management styles. Change the top-down, expert strategy -- "Moses coming down from the mountain with a tablet so operations people could run out and do something."

B. Joint creation of strategy by staff & line. "One of the problems in the old issues management was nobody knew what the strategy was. If you don't know the strategy, you're in no position to respond to specific issues." Move from philosophy to practicality.

C. New organizational culture. "One with a sense of shared purpose, shared strategic vision. Supportive of big insights as opposed to the certainties managers cherish." By instilling this, new issues management becomes a key change agent for the whole org'n. This side benefit doubles its value.

"The changes we've experienced in organizations in the last 5 years have challenged not only public relations, public affairs & strategic planners. They've challenged the very roots of traditional management practice. Where changes in process have been embraced, issues management is alive & well. Where they have not, it has been disbanded."



D. "Challenge now is to remember direction has to be flexible." Decisionmakers on issues must stay flexible in order to accommodate organizational changes.

Structure At Bell Canada 1) "Our aim goes beyond initial issues management into strategy. 2) We're trying to assure these strategies are flexible, to avoid surprises -- what I call peripheral vision. 3) We still deal with policy in terms of buying lead time over issues we feel can be managed. 4) This means they have to be at least 2-3 years away given the response requirements of complex organizations. 5) But we're also putting in place a seed bed for detection of business opportunities -- new revenues, new businesses."

Issue Analysis at Bell Canada is now done by a multi-level, multi-function, multi-disciplinary network within the org'n -- "radical because networks usurp the traditional culture & decision flow in organizations." Assignment is voluntary. "Key is to find people with an unusual mix of 3 qualities: knowledgeable, credible & a bit flaky." Group -- this year with 15-20 members -- meets on a quarterly basis. 3 steering committees -- "where the real stuff happens" -- deal with 1) telecommunications, 2) revenue generation, 3) marketing.

2 Types Of Info Sought 1. Accommodation: Offers "stage setting, mind framing, a different perspective on known things, a new angle, re-perceiving the environment. So it's wisdom increasing. It's also competitive because it gives us a competitive edge when we find it. But infrequently discovered."

2. Assimilation. "Makes sense within a given context. Has to do with identifying threats & opportunities. Timing is very important. Cause & effect type information. It's analytical. Signals a change of degree."

Issues Management Ass'n National Conference -- "An International Perspective on Issues" -- will be held Oct 8-10 in DC. (Details from Joseph Cook, IMA, 1615 L St NW, Ste.925, Wash DC 20036; 202/296-9200)

CEOs ARE BARRIERS TO GOOD ANNUAL REPORTS, SID CATO FINDS IN REVIEWING 1986 CROP When CEOs write their own shareholder letters, they're 4 times more likely not to have a winning annual report. That's one finding from analysis of winning & non-winning ARs in Cato's annual survey. Furthermore:

¶When AR producers report to the CEO, per-copy cost rises to \$2.64, contrasted to \$2.52 among non-winners and \$2.12 among winners.

¶Winning ARs are 35% more likely to be a team effort than a 1-person show. And when it is a team effort, winners are likely to have 6 on their teams vs. 3 for non-winners.

¶20% of practitioners report to the CEO on the AR. 34% say the CEO writes the shareholder letter. 66% identify the CEO as actively involved; so about 1 in 3 isn't.

Good CEO Involvement ¶Winners report to the CEO nearly twice as often; and they're paid 31% more.

¶CEOs are 19% more likely to be involved in winners -- 75% vs. 63%.

The Project ¶51.1 pages is the average winning-AR length; 43.7 for non-winners.

¶Winners devote 6.8 months to the project vs. 5.6 for non-winners.

The Producers ¶Experience counts, so producers of winners are substantially older. Half are 45-54, with 19% in each of the 35-44 and 55-64 age groups. Only 13% are 25-34. Non-winners, on the other hand, are younger: 25-34 (33%); 35-44 (40%); 45-54 (19%); 55-64 (6%).

¶Public relations is the primary background for 69% of all AR producers, but more so among winners -- 81% vs. 65%. (Survey from Cato, Box 14895, Chi 60614; \$107)

ENVIRONMENTALISM RE-EMERGES: SEEN AS UNITING FACTOR TO STIR PUBLIC TO NEW ACTION The environmental movement lost its punch because its beliefs & programs were broadly accepted. While Environmental Defense Fund, Friends of the Earth & several other organizations have been busy fighting to win polluters & despoilers within the law -- and protecting regulations from abrogation -- the glamour & headlines went out of it.

Now the international nature of pro-environment feeling is cited as a way to unite mankind. Once that is accomplished, mankind could rise up against the world's huge current problems -- and their instigators. These are powerful currents, because nothing less than "protecting the biological basis of our species" is at stake. Consider this megathreat:

- 1. Tropical forests, which affect global climate, are being destroyed by cutting.
- 2. Temperate forests are dying from acid rain.
- 3. Top soil, source of food supply, is being lost at alarming rates.
- 4. The chemical revolution has become an emerging nightmare.
- 5. War or atomic accident threatens "nuclear winter."

"By working together with the rest of the world on environmental concerns that cannot wait, we may learn to solve many of the problems that now divide us politically," says Noel Brown of the U.N. Environmental Program.

HIRING A RESEARCH FIRM? DOING YOUR OWN? SOME INSIGHTS FROM RESEARCH PROS Garnered from several seminars on the subject. Researcher's eye-view on what to consider, what to ask for, what to expect & what to avoid:

- 1. What are you trying to find out? Who are you interested in and what do you want to know? Do you need demographics? Attitudes? Behavior?