

VIEW FROM THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE: PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPENDS ON LEADERS BUT "CORPORATE AMERICA HAS TOO MANY MANAGERS AND NOT ENOUGH LEADERS," SAYS RETIRING EXEC WHO HANDLED ONE OF THE TOUGHEST PR PROBLEMS

"Leaders look further down the road. Corporate takeovers, however, are producing managers -- people concerned with short-term numbers," Charles Kittrell, retiring Phillips Petroleum exec vp, told pr.

The Hot Seat During the oil embargo in '73, Kittrell took a leadership role. An engineer, he was responsible for the petroleum products group. "At that time people were so mad at us. They figured it was a big plot by oil companies. They were ready to string us up. And Congress was talking about nationalizing us, making us divest ourselves of various operations, all kinds of dire things. We also were under detailed, stupid government controls. We had shortages in some places but couldn't move excess fuel from one city to another because of those regulations."

Relationships As A Strategy In the midst of these problems, Kittrell saw an opportunity.

He explained the plan to his pr & gov't rels directors (no longer with Phillips): "Talk to the people in our own back yard where we have 'energy credibility' -- where we've marketed for 20-30 years under the Phillips shield -- and I think they'll listen to us." But the idea was turned down. The battle would be won in Washington, they said, with lobbyists, not talking to people with whom they felt they had no credibility.

Stunned, "I called my 3 vice presidents -- refining, marketing & transportation. Told them we're not going to get any help from pr, we're going to do it ourselves." Each took 2 states where they'd been good corporate citizens & were well known, and began calling on people. "I remember ending up in Denver, on my own, in a pay phone calling the Denver Post and saying, 'My name's Charlie Kittrell. I'm exec vp of an oil company. I'd

"The legacy I'm leaving is don't ever let up on your external relations with the media & others. It's an asset in a changing & troubled world. You can't fuss at the media for coming out with a cockeyed position if you aren't willing to level with them & say why it's cockeyed."

"As a result of the public relations work I've done, I'm much more conscious of what can be done if you're willing to talk to people. If you're able & willing to face one another & answer questions, it's amazing how much can be resolved. Oil people & environmentalists began meeting about 2-years ago. They ended up agreeing that the Dep't of Interior should allow the oil industry to explore for & develop oil & gas reserves in the Bering Sea. People with differing opinions but the same goals can resolve problems as long as they can communicate."



like to talk to your energy editor, whoever the hell he is.' Believe it or not, with that heavy-handed, naive, kindergarten approach I got in to see the governors of Arkansas & Colorado and their energy staffs. And I talked to quite a few people on the newspaper."

Management Sees

Communication's Value

A new public relations person arrived on the scene to help. "From then on it was the Kittrell & Caudill traveling show. We found out we did have credibility. We opened ourselves to a lot of questions. People were fearful not only about us but for us -- that we wouldn't be able to live up to our commitments. That was a beginning. Now we have a great staff. Not as big as before Boone Pickens & Icahn lowered the boom on us. But still as good."

Media Encounters

Bring Gains

1. "It changed our preconceived ideas about media people. I am impressed by their professional courtesy. Makes me realize we can be guilty of what we accuse the media of doing -- stereotyping. We raise holy hell when they say 'all oil companies are this or that.' But we've done the same thing to them."

2. "It makes you do your homework better. They're not hostile, just smart & curious. They ask tough questions. Make you analyze what you believe & why, so you can explain it to somebody who is going to play devil's advocate."

3. Self-confidence is gained from the ability to defend yourself before a hostile interrogator -- whether it's a congressional committee, employee group, reporter. "It can turn a manager into a leader."

4. "We don't know how to measure this, but because of our people and the work we've done with the media, we got a better shake in the press during the hostile takeover attempts than we would have otherwise (see pr 12/24/84). Especially when you consider our chairman practically forbid us to talk to the media. If it had not been for a reservoir of goodwill built up over time, we wouldn't have done as well."

"When top management can't do something themselves, if they send the right signals, there are more than enough capable people waiting in the wings. There is incredible talent in any organization to do this sort of thing. The only question is does management concur that it's important & needs to be done. If so, it will be done. The people are there."

EXPERTS IN THE INDUSTRY ADVISE:  
BE VERY CAREFUL BEFORE YOU JUMP  
INTO DESKTOP PUBLISHING CRAZE

Desktop publishing is projected to grow from a market of \$300 million in '86 to \$3 billion in '91. Users & consultants at a National Computer Graphics Ass'n (Fairfax, Va.) roundtable made these assessments about the technology's progress & problems:

1. Define needs. "Vendors are doing a moderately poor to horrible job of helping buyers understand what they want," says a marketing consultant for computer-aided publishing vendors.

2. Carefully consider the companies behind the products. Roundtable participants agree that vendor support & training are essential.

3. "People too often shop just for price. Many vendors are struggling with low product prices. Why does desktop publishing software cost only \$500? Because no one can tell you how it works. There's no business structure in place to support these products. If it's a serious job, it's worth committing some money to get the hardware, software & support you need," says a president of a consulting firm specializing in large-scale publishing.

4. "If you buy your products from a dealer, you're in trouble. Talk to the factory directly or become an expert yourself," says a user who is president of a publishing company. Some vendors are finding ways to accommodate buyers' need for training & support, e.g., videotapes, teaching discs.

5. "The biggest mistake you can make is to assume that because you have the tools, you know what you are doing," believes a consulting firm president. Vendors such as Aldus are offering templates & teaching programs that help new users learn & adapt professional layout techniques.

6. Besides changing the production process, implementing desktop publishing may mean accepting some compromises in the final product. Desktop publishing systems may offer fewer fonts or lower-resolution output. But once in place, compromises should be more than compensated for by savings in production time & costs, according to a user who designs & produces a wide variety of pub'ns.

7. Advise the experts: Prepare for a surge in demand. Once it becomes known that attractive documents can be produced in-house, applications flourish. Be prepared to spend time bringing co-workers up to speed with the system so they can produce their own documents.

PHONE-BOOK STYLE ANNUAL REPORT  
INCREASES EXPOSURE FOR HOSPITAL SERVICES

Jean Tierney, comty rels dir, Community Memorial Hospital (Toms River, NJ) told prr. Inspired by her phone book, Tierney "stopped the presses," changed the annual report's format to phone-book style, added a directory of the hospital's services and sent to press the new version -- at the same cost as the traditional annual report.

"Informal research showed retention (of the traditional annual report) was poor -- people didn't keep it,"

"It has been a tremendous morale builder for employees as well." Tierney's advice to others considering this format: "A key to success is building a good communications base with all departments involved. This was crucial for us because we had only 6 weeks to pull it together. Also, don't leave anyone out."

Divided into 6 sections -- each using a different color paper -- 208-page self-mailer is printed in large type for easy readability, provides fingertip convenience to information about hospital services, medical & dental staff, support & wellness programs, senior health and the annual report. Hospital services are "advertised" yellow-pages style and clip-out coupons offer discounts on Diabetes Education Series, a free copy of "First Aid Facts," tidbits of consumer information, and more.

"Response has been wonderful," says Tierney. Although 12,000 copies were originally sent to employees, hospital association members, PTAs, schools & community org'ns, high demand means a second printing is under way. An excellent marketing

tool, the directory will be placed on every patient's bedside table. Doctors are requesting copies by the caseload for office reception areas.

"RATING AMERICA'S CORPORATE CONSCIENCE":  
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IS MORE THAN  
A THEORY OF ENLIGHTENED SELF INTEREST

buy or stockbrokers to invest according to their values & philosophies -- is found in this "provocative guide."

Compiled by Council on Economic Priorities, which has analyzed corporate & gov't behavior since its founding by Alice Tepper Marlin in '69. Book rates 130 leading companies -- e.g., Johnson & Johnson, Exxon, RJR Nabisco, GE, Beatrice Foods, Kellogg -- as well as compares similar products. Ratings allow readers to make their own judgments, tho there is an "author's company of choice."

Ratings are based on criteria such as: involvement in South Africa, number of women & minority directors & officers, charitable donations, environmental records, political contributions, women's purchasing programs, animal testing, weapons contracts.

Info was gathered thru questionnaires sent to companies, federal documents, technical articles, annual reports, personal interviews, newspapers, magazines, directories, data centers. Because companies' positions change regularly, a monthly newsletter will update. (\$14.95, 499 pgs; Addison-Wesley, Reading, Mass.)

ITEM OF INTEREST TO PRACTITIONERS

Resigning from Prime Minister  
Mulroney's cabinet, long-time MP Roch

LaSalle showed his understanding of the realities. He said, "In politics, it seems that perception is more important than reality." He left office in the wake of an alleged scandal, which he termed "insinuations" & "unfounded vicious allegations."

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

SENTENCED. John Gnau, Gnau & Assocs (Bloomfield Hills, Mich) to 3 yrs in prison, fined \$10,000 for conspiracy

It's bumping into the bottom line and affecting income. Shopping list of corporations' social performance -- which makes it possible for people to

"Interest in the social conduct of US corporations is not a recent phenomenon. In the early 1900s the Progressive political party, along with muckraking journalists, focused the nation's attention on issues such as dangerous working conditions in factories, unsanitary food processing methods, and the exploitation of women & children.

"The highly publicized social consciousness of the 1960s and 1970s may appear to have been replaced by the widely proclaimed, self-interested economic consciousness of the 1980s. But a legacy has endured -- the expectation that corporations demonstrate a sensitivity & commitment to social issues. This legacy has become institutionalized in government, in the public interest movement, in grassroots citizen activism, and within the corporate world itself. Over the past decades many companies have taken substantial strides. Amoco, for example, has developed an outstanding program of economic support for community revitalization and minority- and women-owned businesses. Avon's corporate policies have focused on women, minorities, and the poor for almost a decade. The company profiles in this book reveal many other significant corporate initiatives."

& paying an illegal gratuity as part of a scheme to win a contract from US Postal Service for a client.