

umbrellas. And, according to the Weather Almanac, only the 7th August since 1958 that Orange County had rain. Yes, one never knows who is watching or listening."

NEW BOOK HELPS MANAGE PR FIRMS BETTER
BY ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

those operations are proper and according to generally accepted practice," writes long-time pr firm manager Michael Sullivan in the introduction to his workbook, Management Audit For Public Relations Firms.

Workbook format poses questions, facilitates self-appraisal of firm operations. If you can answer a simple "yes" to the question, go on to the next. Sullivan affirms the old adage, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Questions you don't understand or don't know the answers to are "danger flags," he says. "Take a close look at those. For it is there that you may find the most danger for the continuing operations of your firm."

3 major sections -- operations, money & practice -- and 16 subsections offer a detailed examination of firm management. Questions with explanations are presented in the left column. Right column provides space for your answers. "Consider letting your team take a look at the completed assessment. Then you can get together and use the areas of disagreement as the outline for a really productive & smooth planning session." After completing the workbook, make a calendar note to go through it again in 6 months, advises Sullivan. "You'll discover new ideas and be prompted to follow up on earlier decisions."

Cautions Sullivan, "Remember, firm management is a tool to help you do public relations better, not an end unto itself. You want to make your systems work for you, not the other way around." (\$39.95 from Sullivan Associates, P.O. Box 229, Doylestown, Pa. 18901)

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

RETIRES. Gerald Wollan v-ohrm, Padilla, Speer, Burdick & Beardsley (Mpls). Former nat'l PRSA ofcr, pioneered pr audit as a tool for analyzing an orgn's comms prgms.

"A simple management skill is the ability to ask the right questions: to audit the operations of the company to make certain

those operations are proper and according to generally accepted practice," writes long-time pr firm manager Michael Sullivan in the introduction to his workbook, Management Audit For Public Relations Firms.

Some sample questions:

1. Do you have a formal plan of employee development & progression?
2. Are employees receiving equal or better treatment than those at competitors, larger or smaller? Have you confirmed that they know it?
3. Do employees have a regular and easy way to pass along their ideas about policies that directly affect them & their work?
4. Do you regularly ask your accountant "Is this necessary?"
5. Are you the firm for clients who can't get credit anywhere else?
6. Do you have a good sense of timing for pressing past due accounts?
7. Do your contracts/letters of agreement have binding arbitration clauses in case of disputes?

Robert Borden, Robert Borden & Assocs (Chi), 81, after career beginning in 1929. Founder & pres of Publicity Club of Chi.

pr reporter

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AS THE BOTTOM LINE & THIS QUARTER'S GOALS BECOME EVERYTHING
THE CIVILIZING ROLE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS CAN GET TRAMPLED;
"GOLDEN RULE CAMPAIGN" AIMS TO HUMANIZE SOCIETY -- & BENEFIT PR

One of public relations' tenets is the Golden Rule -- "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." It's an essential factor in positive public relationships. And in marketing a product or service, running an organization or maintaining civilization.

Now Imagebank, a public relations firm, is originating a campaign to revive awareness & use of the Golden Rule. "After 10 years experience promoting various social causes, an inescapable conclusion surfaced, one that was intimated in virtually every previous campaign: if people would follow the Golden Rule, public relations would be easier, not to mention society as a whole better off. Creating a national Golden Rule Campaign was a logical extension," Stuart Greenbaum told pr.

Final impetus was a joke by an LA nightclub comic doing a routine on bad freeway drivers. His biggest laugh came when he warned the audience, "Never use your blinker (when merging into traffic). That just tips them off!" "This simple but frustrating commentary on current social behavior suggested the need for the Campaign."

Biggest challenge is establishing campaign's credibility, says Greenbaum. Idealistic goals -- peace, public safety, improved quality of life -- make movement seem overwhelming, "but exciting & necessary."

RESEARCH. 6-month-old campaign has concentrated primarily on researching public attitudes about honesty, morality & people's standards of behavior toward one another. Nearly 3/4ths of Americans are dissatisfied with the level of honesty & standards of behavior in the country, finds one poll. Another indicates 2/3rds of Americans are dissatisfied with the ethics & morality of their compatriots. "This research is critical to the Campaign. Not only does it validate interest & need, but it also suggests direction for themes & appeals to help change such negative public opinion."

TACTICS. Campaign will 1) rely heavily on PSAs in the mass media; 2) market clothing & other merchandise bearing the Golden Rule logo; 3) publish public info literature & articles for magazines; 4) sponsor special events & recognition programs.

Whether it's stock market demand for assets now or a hospital's drive for immediate market share, the short-term planning -- & mindset -- they engender easily overlook the long-term bottom-line link of true, trusting relationships. Why do we rarely hear anymore that public relations is "the conscience of the organization"?



5) Campaign is also "a natural for employee participation activities":
 a) include articles in employee newsletters, b) recognize "Golden Rule Employee of the Month"; c) present Golden Rule shirts or lapel pins for exemplary service; and d) "open the door for more broad-based community relations endeavors."

Program will target topics ranging from international relations, criminal justice, professional ethics, character development, personal relationships, common courtesy, driving habits. "Program couldn't be more timely. Besides the media attention focused on the Iran-contra scandal & the Gary Hart & Jim Bakker affairs, ethics has been the cover story in recent editions of both US News & World Report and Time."

Campaign's advisory council includes authorities on social science, education, public safety & health, business & public relations. Edward L. Bernays is donating his experience to the project. Budget for 1st year is \$150,000 and should increase 3- or 4-fold in following years, says Greenbaum. It's funded solely by donations from private foundations, corporations & the public.

ANOTHER BENEFIT. "Public relations -- most notably when it is referred to as 'pr' -- has a fairly significant image problem. I hope this campaign can serve a dual purpose: to work toward the betterment of society in general and, in the process, bestow some deserving goodwill on our profession." (For more info or to participate, contact Golden Rule Campaign, Box 221776, Sacramento, Calif. 95822)

TO KEEP AHEAD OF THE COMPETITION
 LEARN HOW & WHEN TO USE VIDEOS

"Video is effective & affordable but as in any industry, there are great pitfalls for the unwary. Shaky cameras, sloppy editing & bad lighting are the product of amateurs. No professional pr person should accept them. But we have found that many do and primarily because they don't know how to avoid them," Marjorie Thomas, CEO, Ivanhoe Communications told prr. IC produces videos for corporations and has produced 5 weekly tv medical programs that are sold to more than 100 network affiliates nationwide (see prr 8/17). Thomas offers these tips:

Questions To Ask
 A Production Company

1. Request recent client list with notes on specific projects.
2. What equipment/services will cause extra charges?
3. Who goes on shoot?
4. Who owns the field tapes?
5. What sort of help will you expect from me?
6. What can I do to keep my costs down & facilitate shooting?

7. Ask to see a demo tape of a complete project, not just excerpts featuring special effects. Look for continuity, consistently good production techniques, esthetic values. Do not be impressed by: a) client list that has not been verified; b) expensive-looking facilities. They may be outdated or "overkill" for your benefit; c) super sales pitch with no finished projects of the caliber you're looking for. Don't let them "learn" on your time; d) technicians...when you need a producer.

Questions A Video Company
 Should Ask You

8. Who is the primary audience?
9. What do you want to accomplish with this tape?
10. Can the taping on-location be done during business hours?
11. Professional on-camera talent or voice-over narrator?
12. Who will write the script?
13. In what type of facility will the tape be shown? (Classroom, small office, auditorium)
14. How will it be shown? On what type of equipment?
15. Do you have materials (slides, photos, videotape, film, music) that you'd like included in the production?
16. Can you provide a list of specifications before asking for bids? (Compare apples to apples and then consider other factors before making a decision based on low-bidder.)
17. Research -- done by American Airlines which convinced them to produce 2 video magazines per month instead of one -- shows video is the best communications tool next to 1-on-1 contact.

Reasons For
 Using Video

18. This is the age of tv, so video is a format people are comfortable with.
19. Most businesses & 50% of US homes now have VCRs so videos can be viewed almost anywhere.
20. Videos are easy to set up & view. They can easily be stopped, reversed & rewound for emphasis or replay.
21. Video is easily updated, duplicated, mailed. (More info from Thomas at Ivanhoe Communications, P.O. Box 865, Orlando 32802; 305/423-8045)

CEREMONIAL RAIN DANCE
 CREATES "SHOWER" OF MEDIA ATTENTION

While some public relations firms promise their clients miracles, Gloria Zigner & Associates (Newport Beach, Calif) actually delivered one. It began when Southern California Water Committee wanted to increase the public's awareness of & attendance at the recent Bay-Delta hearings -- discussing Southern California's water shortage & possible solutions. To dramatize the topic & capture media attention, GZA hired a group of Xipe Totec Indians to perform a ceremonial rain dance the day before the hearings. Event was held in 90 degree heat on the shores of a dry lake bed in Anaheim.

It attracted substantial media attention -- tv & radio news crews, wire services, and local, regional & national papers. And seating at the next-day meeting was "standing room only."

But "the best was yet to come," reports GZA. "The miracle was that 2 days later IT RAINED! No mere light mist, either, We're talking full-on windshield wipers &