

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PRACTITIONERS:

¶American Companies Miss Out by ignoring employee ideas, says Quality Circle Institute (Red Bluff, Calif). "On our last trip to Japan, we discovered Pioneer Electronics averaged 60 suggestions per employee per year. At Canon it was 70, Mitsubishi more than 100. In the US, the average is .14 suggestions per employee per year," says pres Don Dewar. "How can we expect to compete when employees aren't involved in their own work?" Dewar suggests: getting top mgmt commitment; forming a steering committee to investigate, chart employee involvement activities; starting small, involving only a few problem solving groups; assessing results after 6 months; expanding the activity to 100% involvement.

¶Consumers Support Pet Causes At Point Of Purchase with new pocketguide. Produced by Council on Economic Priorities, "Shopping For A Better World" indicates brand names which help (and harm) society, environment. Companies are rated according to their role in advancing minorities & women, ecological improvement, ending Apartheid & charitable giving. Other categories include animal testing, defense contracts, nuclear power support. Examples: Afro Sheen hair products rate high on advancement of minorities/women, but also high on animal testing. General Electric gives a lot to charity, but manufactures nuclear weapon components. Some cos rate the ! category which could be good or bad, depending on if they "pay 50% daycare," "recycle aluminum" or "make pesticides." It's easy to see where these authors stand on the issues -- how would they rate your organization? (For copy send \$4.95 to CEP, 30 Irving Place, NYC 10003.)

¶Fagged Morale, Flagging Enrollment inspired elementary school district super Fred Miller's (Laveen, Ariz) "Adopt A Board Member" program, says Governing mag. For 3 months at a time, elementary school classes send cards & crafts to a member of the school board. In exchange, member visits classroom, explains board's role, fields questions & concerns. Students are granted forum & audience for grievances about policies, practices, cafeteria food. "It's a cost-free way to improve board morale & student self esteem," says Miller. Can idea be implemented in management, other industries, sectors? Already Miller is considering starting "Adopt A Cop" to encourage civic pride in the police department.

¶Sneakiest Way To Break Thru The Clutter is to send editors a letter or kit beginning: "Enclosed is the material we discussed today on the phone." pr received such a package from a NYC pr firm. The addressee was in another part of the country on the day of the phony phone call and certainly did not speak with the cagey account exec then or at any other time. The objective, however -- to receive attention & scrutiny -- was achieved.

¶No More Peanuts For Roberta. Roberta Fortune's Almanac is a San Fran-based catalogue of unique products, gourmet items, etc. Before Christmas, it arrived with a note attached: "In the past, we packed cartons with styrofoam peanuts, but we learned that chlorofluorocarbons are one of the major contributors to the depletion of our ozone layer." Note apologizes for inconveniencing customers & adds: "It may seem like a pebble in a pond, but we want to do our part to protect our precious environment. By accepting this you will support our environmental concerns."

pr reporter

The Weekly Newsletter of Public Relations,
Public Affairs & Communication

Vol.32 No.3
January 16, 1989

603 / 778 - 0514

NEW STUDY COMPARING JOB SATISFACTION, OTHER DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRACTITIONERS & JOURNALISTS WILL HELP UNDERSTAND MEDIA PERSONNEL, MANAGE PUBLIC RELATIONS STAFF

When it comes to their jobs, pr people are happier than journalists -- but more materialistic! Researchers from journalism/mass comm dep't of San Jose State U. sent questionnaires to 800 West Coast journalists & pr practitioners. A response of 44% (ironically, 177 from each group) indicates journalists are dissatisfied with their jobs, but not only because of salary:

1. Autonomy. Both groups emphasize it, but practitioners have it -- ability to influence events in their org'n, freedom to determine emphasis of projects. Journalists report being unable to make important decisions. 36 of them refer to cruel, callous, inept editors who have too much control. Only 4 practitioners cite their boss or supervisor as being a severe detriment to their job.
2. Career Advancement. The practitioners place a significantly higher value on it, both groups feel "the only way to move up is to move out." PR dep'ts tend to be small & writer/reporter jobs scarce. "However, there are more jobs in pr. If you're a reporter, the only place to go is desk editor, city editor. There are not a lot of those jobs."
3. Promotion Of Women. PR has more women, representing all levels & positions. In journalism, over 1/3 of women surveyed are at the level of "reporter." "Many women leave journalism for pr because of this."
4. Sense Of Worth. PR people feel much more valuable at their org'n than do the journalists. Write-in responses further substantiate that reporters feel mistreated, disrespected, demeaned by editors & mgmt.

¶"Whereas practitioners see themselves as playing a number

Wilcox told pr the survey confirmed other studies on the personalities of journalists vs. practitioners: a) "Journalists tend to be loners; b) And they have a reputation of being negative, cynical, whereas pr people are optimistic & happy in a corporate environment, a mgmt structure; c) It's been said journalists like to bitch. Perhaps a lot of their dissatisfaction is not so much to do with their jobs, but just that they bitch about everything."



of roles, journalists are basically technicians. This, claims Wilcox, correlates to the autonomy factor. Interestingly, none of the practitioners wrote responses here, "probably because they're content."

5. Salary. Tho it isn't of major significance, salary does play a role in job satisfaction. Journalists depict a bleak financial picture. More than a third who left journalism for pr say they did so for financial reasons. And 25% of the journalists say salary is the worst aspect of their job. But practitioners report a high level of salary satisfaction, more raises & increases.

¶Journalists at non-Guild publications are most troubled by salary issues & express frustration with publishers who are willing to pay less for 2nd class work from poorly qualified writers, rather than reward exceptional writers with high salaries.

Personality Differences PR respondents show more confidence in public speaking, communication, dealing with the public, team playing, supervising & leading, planning, organizing, than the journalists, who give themselves lower scores. "There is a saying, 'if you need an organizer, call on a pr practitioner, because journalists can't organize themselves out of a paper bag.'" Also, practitioners feel at home with organization, management, things corporate. Journalists do not.

Practitioners are more likely to attend professional meetings; a major complaint about reporters is they don't keep up on what's going on -- ironically! There's little difference between how the 2 groups view family, work, leisure.

Salary vs. Status

Salary is more significant to pr. Unlike the journalists, practitioners correlate income with job satisfaction. They report higher value on material things & are more likely to consider income when choosing a profession.

Journalists stress status, which for them does not mean a Jaguar or Gucci shoes. Instead, a number of respondents say they want: a) to work for a prestige paper -- e.g. New York Times, Washington Post; b) recognition for their writing ability -- Pulitzers, etc.

Altho practitioners are more materialistic than journalists, there is no significant difference between either group's commitment to helping society. "This is kind of a throwaway question. No one would admit it if they didn't want to help society," says Wilcox. "In many studies, however, both groups consistently adopt this as a major goal."

For survey summary, write Dr. Dennis Wilcox, School of Applied Arts & Sciences, Dep't of Journalism & Mass Comn, 1 Washington Square, San Jose, Calif 95192-0055

ARE "EFFICIENT GOV'T" ATTEMPTS NO-WIN SITUATIONS?
SOME SAY PUBLIC WILL GET SHORT SHRIFF FROM FOREST SERVICE PROPOSAL,
AGENCY SAYS RULE WILL ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE PARTICIPATION

Claiming death by paperwork, US Forest Service proposes streamlining the appeals process in its Forest Mgmt Program. This will: 1) eliminate public's right to appeal to upper levels of the agency; 2) allow only 45 days to file; 3) abolish the 60-day appeal extension, which had been commonly granted for preparation of technical cases.

Proposal upsets groups who say it will severely curtail the public's role in forest mgmt:

¶"The existing policy gives the public a real chance to challenge the mgmt of national forests & play an effective role," Mike Anderson, Wilderness Society (D.C.) told prr. "If the proposal goes thru, there will be much less of an opportunity for this."

¶Policy specialist Justin Ward, Natural Resources Defense Council (D.C.) adds: "The public appeal of agency positions has been in progress for most of this decade. Because of it, both process & product have improved. I don't have a crystal ball, but if this becomes law, there will be more court action, more litigation, increased public distrust of the Forest Service & support for the existing sentiment, 'the agency is not listening.'"

The public often contests decisions about logging & timber sales. Road development & habitat preservation are also controversial. Public affairs is a hot job title in the Forest Service these days. "The regional forester or forest supervisor makes mistakes in his analysis," Ward told prr. "So far, the public has been able to check them."

But US Forest Service says it wants sound public participation. "The new rule will make public input less formal, less procedural," UFS spokesman Larry Hill (D.C.) told prr. "The people can still appeal, but we want the official avenue of access to be at the beginning of the process."

NRDC says only 1/10 of 1% of the agency's budget is slated for appeals. But the current process is so cumbersome that the agency is "struggling & strangling." Says Hill, "Something must change." Sec'y of Agriculture is expected to okay the proposal before the end of the month. "He's given us his approval in concept." Hill insists the proposal is sensitive to public needs. "I can't think of any other Forest Mgmt rule that has had more conferencing, more dialoguing with the public than this one has. We feel very good about it."

"The public's role won't be curtailed," says Hill. "In the procedure we have now, all the emphasis is on the end of the process -- in the appeals stage. If people are really concerned, they can get involved at the beginning so they can meet with constituent groups & hammer out decisions." Hill says proposal will end a lot of game playing. "We find there are many people who become involved only after the decision has been made. They respond to what they don't like & try to get decisions reversed. 1 The proposal will alter that process & encourage them to be responsible, participate early-on."