

determined they'd be ruined if they did not have time to shift away from asbestos-related to other products. We know what happened -- their economic calculations failed, they found themselves in bankruptcy reorganization and had to set aside \$2.5 billion for asbestos victims. They eventually shut down."

#### ITEMS OF INTEREST FOR PRACTITIONERS

Associations Are Thriving In US & Abroad, says News USA. They are best described as pr firms with one client. In the early 1900s, America had 100 of them. Now it has over 21,500. Add over 500,000 state, regional & local ass'ns & 4,000 int'l ones, and it's easy to see how they have a collective per year payroll of \$16 billion & generate about \$43 billion per year. Ass'ns maintain a supreme role in setting product standards, conducting research, lobbying the gov't, providing education & informing the general public. Oldest trade ass'n in the US is the New York State Chamber Of Commerce, established in 1768.

Award-Winning Auto Repair School Emphasizes Communication, because mechanics and customers don't trust each other. Customers never know for sure if all of that tech jargon is just a cover up for a rip off, nothing was really that wrong with their car to begin with. Mechanics sense this. "We try to work with the tech student on com skills, consumer attitudes, work ethic & attitude," says Richard Diklich, coord of the auto tech program at Longview Community College (Albuquerque). School has won the annual competition of the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Ass'n & the American Vocational Ass'n Industry Planning Council with a curriculum that's 2/3rds mechanics & 1/3rd liberal arts. Program may indicate a new degree of sophistication of the auto repair profession. "The technology of the car has increased. The amount of material we have to teach has more than doubled since the 70s. Training has become more necessary, and the manufacturers have begun looking to colleges & universities for help."

College President Taught PR, Only She Doesn't Know It. Michele Myers, Bryn Mawr dean, has been named president of Denison U (Granville, O). Noticing that she once served as assoc prof of communication at Trinity U, (San Antonio), prr contacted her to find out if she ever taught pr, and, if so, how it may have helped her in her ascent up the ladder of academe. "My degree is in com-  
munication, not in public relations," she told prr. "I am a social scientist. I study group dynamics, organizational behavior, organizational communication, complex organizations & small groups. It has nothing to do with pr." Incidentally, she says her training allowed her to observe individuals' behaviors, group dynamics -- preparing her to assume leadership roles.

#### WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

RETIRED. Leighton Gilman, vp pr Ohio Bell, to consult & teach in New England. Gilman joined Ohio Bell in '77 & was named corp comn vp for holding co Ameritech in '83. He also served as pres Ameritech Fndn. In '87

he returned to Ohio to head Ohio Bell's pr & pa dep'ts, became pres of Ohio Bell Fndn.

FIRMS. Dan Baer (Sherman Oaks, Calif), who counsels pr firms, sells his firm to Cerrell Assoc (LA).

# pr reporter

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#### TREATING WORKERS BUILDING NEW FACILITY AS AN INTERNAL PUBLIC ENCOURAGES PRIDE IN WORKMANSHIP, MEETING DEADLINES, TEAMWORK; ANOTHER BOTTOM-LINE IMPACT OF PR THAT CAN BE ADAPTED ANYWHERE

"What we're dealing with is an uneducated, slipping workforce," said Bob Dilenschneider to the Construction Industry Presidents' Forum (pr 12/19/88). Listing a host of industry problems, including poor management, he lamented the erosion of quality & workmanship in America's buildings, roads, infrastructures.

In northwest metropolitan Detroit, William Beaumont Hospital is augmenting its facility with major construction -- a project which will take 5 years. Quality craftsmanship is of paramount concern, and WBH applied innovative public relations thinking to the problem. It's finding that workers respond to demonstrations of involvement, friendship, confidence & TLC.

"The program has been operating for about 6 months, but judging from the reactions of the workers, it's already having an impact," Collette Stimmell, supvr construction comn, told prr. "A lot of them are saying this is the best job they've worked on."

Stimmell details the components of Project BEST (Building Excellence Safety Teamwork):

A. Orientation "When workers come on board, they go thru an orientation to learn about our hospital. We want them to realize why we're expanding, the types of services we'll be offering, how our expansion is relevant to the community and to them. We want them to understand that they're part of the team, that their efforts are important to us." Orientation includes:

1. Slide program about Beaumont;
2. "Commitment To Quality" video, featuring hospital CEO and pres of company managing the construction;
3. Distribution of ID badges, personalized hard hats;

"Companies which have implemented similar programs found that when construction workers understand how they fit into the Big Picture of a project, they develop a sense of belonging which ultimately results in quality craftsmanship," Mike Killian, dir mktg & pa, told prr. "And the cost is definitely justifiable. Supposedly, improving the quality of construction saves 2-5% of overall cost. Workers won't have to do things over again, deadlines can be met. If we can achieve that goal even halfway, we'll be getting a return on our investment -- speedier construction, higher quality craftsmanship, happier workers."



B. Newsletter "Bi-monthly, 445 people, receive the BEST Bulletin, including workers, contractors, building trade union offices & Beaumont administrators & staff. Full of photos of construction crews on the job, it updates them on construction progress, recognizes workers' efforts, profiles different contractors. Workers can receive other Beaumont newsletters & literature upon request."

C. Incentive & Milestone Events

1. Health fairs, including a blood pressure screening for the workers -- 51 participated;
2. 6 appreciation luncheons -- including a pizza party -- celebrating progress at various stages of building;
3. Softball game involving construction workers from 2 different buildings;
4. Impromptu events. Ice cream was distributed on a 100-degree day last summer, and a hot soup lunch was provided recently when the weather was especially raw.

D. Awards "Workers are encouraged to submit suggestions which save time, money, improve safety, working conditions, teamwork. Those who do receive a Beaumont hat & t-shirt. Particularly outstanding suggestions get cash awards. We also reward crews who show extra care in safety by giving members top quality first aid kits."

Stimmell: "We're trying to promote interaction among the trades. They all work for different contractors, belong to different unions and there is a certain amount of animosity. We try to get them together, unite them in a common purpose while at the same time making them part of our team and showing them how much we appreciate what they're doing for us."

E. Facilities "A little discussed but much appreciated aspect of the BEST program -- heated/air conditioned lunch room; daily coffee; doughnuts twice a week; heated toilet trailer. This portion of the program touches the daily lives of all of the workers & results in many appreciative comments."

Program is inspired by 4-year study of the construction industry by Business Roundtable (NYC). It questioned CEOs of major corporations about the cost effectiveness of construction, found that productivity & quality are declining at an alarming rate.

BEST's effectiveness will be evaluated by questionnaires to contractors. Even without this evidence, Stimmell is confident workers are happy. "Many of them are saying they want to come back and work for us again -- and we'd be happy to continue working with people who know all about Beaumont, take pride in the project and are glad to be a part of our team."

(To obtain copy of Business Roundtable construction industry research, contact Business Roundtable, 200 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10166; 212/682-6370.)

"NEED FOR GOOD PR HAS TAKEN A QUANTUM LEAP IN PAST DECADE -- EXISTS IN ORGANIZATIONS LARGE & SMALL"

That according to the Nat'l Institute of Biz Management (NYC). "Head of pr is now senior officer, with quick access to CEO. Reason: increasing impact management actions have on an organization's various publics." In Research Recommendations newsletter, NIBM cites Tylenol and Bhopal as examples of corporate crisis which demanded immediate response in order to: a) repair reputation; b) exercise damage control.

Also, internal communications are more crucial these days because employee reaction to events, such as a hostile takeover try, can spell survival or disaster. Even small firms need pr more & more. Advice:

1. Build your own internal pr staff if you have an ongoing need;
2. Choose firm with experience in your market area, be it hi-tech or nonprofit;
3. Match size of your company with pr firm's;
4. Ask for references, check them out;
5. Get cost estimate up front. Article notes, "Firms bill on hourly basis, from \$50 to \$250 depending on expertise."

PR is boom industry says NIBM -- top 10 firms billed \$500 million in 1988.

STUMPED BY AN ETHICS PROBLEM? ECONOMIST SAYS TAKE A LESSON IN BASIC PHILOSOPHY

If your management pressures you to skate close to the edge ethically, "the tensions become unbearable," economist Michael Lavelle, pres John Carroll U (Cleve) told Christian Science Monitor. But "answers can be found from 3 acquaintances who sat with us in Philosophy 101."

¶Immanuel Kant, German philosopher: One of his theories on morality is the categorical imperative -- "if I don't want the act that I'm contemplating to become universal law, then I shouldn't do it."

Cummins Diesel (Richmond, Ind) is widely respected for honesty & public concern. One of their precepts: "If you're asked to do something that you wouldn't want printed in your hometown newspaper tomorrow, don't do it."

¶John Rawls, American moralist: Philosophy is a variation on the "do unto others" theme, so decisions about fairness should be made with the assumption that we have a 50% chance of being the recipient of the act.

¶Jeremy Bentham, English utilitarian: Add up the benefits vs. the costs -- an action is right (profitable) only if the sum of utilities (benefits) produced by the act is greater than the sum total produced by any other act that could be performed in its place (costs).

Lavelle recalls '65, when Johns-Manville became privy to studies showing asbestos was deadly for workers: "JM performed an economic benefit analysis and