

MOST AMERICANS THINK AD BAN ON ALCOHOL OK; 1ST AMENDMENT IN TROUBLE?

Roper poll finds 56% support for former Surgeon Gen. Koop's proposal to ban alcohol advertising. 31% think it's a great idea, almost every population segment favors it in general. Agreement increases with age -- only 47% of those 18-29 think it's a great idea compared with 59% of those 30-59, and 61% who are 60+. Support for ban is strongest in Northeast (59%) & South (58%), weakest in Midwest (52%) & West (51%).

If ads -- on anything -- can be prohibited, other means of communication are also endangered. Civil libertarians say that as long as a product is legal, it should enjoy First Amendment rights. But history says First Amendment was largely ignored until a few decades ago -- as censorship laws show. Bans which may be proposed next: product, operational, profit.

Opinion polls are often simplistic & inaccurate -- but if this is indeed public sentiment, put corporate free speech on your list of top emerging issues. Last fall First Amendment Congress had to cancel plans for the first public discussion of the topic because beer, cigarette, sexual aids & other controversial product makers didn't want to dignify existence of an issue (pr 8/21/89).

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PRACTITIONERS

¶ Top 3 Business Speaking Platforms in US are 1) Detroit Economic Club (39%), 2) Conference Board (31%), 3) National Press Club (16%), say corporate speechwriters. Allen Miller, exec pr mgr, Corning (Corning, NY), and research firm Quarles, Schnurr & Assocs (Fairfax, Va), identified 75 Fortune 250 companies with designated exec speechwriters. Interviews with 49 of them produced these rankings.

¶ There's That Title, Again -- "Relationship Manager!" It's part of "relationship banking," a trend away from the impersonal dealmaking that got banks in trouble in the 80s. The last time we saw it, it was in an employment ad for Citibank (pr 1/15). This time, Bank of Boston needs one. At least now we can offer a more detailed definition. B of B calls for someone who can create & maintain loan service relationships with business organizations & individuals. "Exceptional interpersonal abilities are essential," it says. Would "financial pr manager" be more apt? Not according to the recruiter for the B of B position. She says the position involves analysis -- "it is more in-depth than a pr job."

¶ Valdez Principles May Be Rule For California public employee pension funds. Legislators have introduced a resolution to that effect (last week's pr).

¶ Editorial Board Goes Public. Austin newspaper runs this on editorial page: "The American-Statesman's editorial board will meet, by prior arrangement, with members of the public, business organizations, political organizations, public interest groups, officeholders, or candidates for public office to discuss matters of public interest. Because of the press of business, the board is usually able to reserve only two afternoons a week for such meetings, though there may be exceptions for urgent matters. To discuss a meeting, call Pati Starr at 445-3660."

**NEW PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EMPHASIS ILLUSTRATED BY FORD:
SEND PR STAFFERS TO GET MASTER'S DEGREE TAILORED FOR THE COMPANY**

Ford headquarters (Dearborn, Mich) and Ohio U (Athens) are pooling efforts in a program that not only sends pr staffers back to school for master's degrees, it trains them from curricula especially tailored to company needs.

What does it cost Ford to enhance the credibility & embellish the qualifications of its employees -- and at the same time teach them about company credos & concerns? Just \$95,000.

How It Started Ford wanted to advance the skill level & knowledge of its pr staff, so in '88 it scouted various colleges within commuting distance (6 hours). It settled on Ohio U's Scripps School of Journalism, calling its pr program "one of the nation's best." Meanwhile, Scripps had been looking for ways to distinguish itself as a pr course leader. And it had just published a planning document calling for increased cooperative efforts with business when it was approached by Ford. So it responded by drafting a cooperative, flexible program proposal.

Program Elements "After a year of meetings, we decided on a curriculum that would meet Ford's needs," program dir Patrick Washburn told pr. Tho most courses highlight media, they are geared toward pr and designed for Ford's specific issues. 2-year program includes:

1. Research methodology;
2. Communication theory;
3. PR problems & case studies. Visiting lecturers include representatives from Dow Chemical & Nationwide Insurance;
4. PR/media law;
5. Media ethics. Will include a session with automotive writers, during which students & press can exchange likes, dislikes about each other;
6. Mass communication (see pr lead article, 2/19);

Goals of Ford's M.S. Program

1. Help pr staffers understand & use academic journals, articles, statistics;
2. Introduce them to pr research methods;
3. Help them advance in Ford.



7. Government & media;

8. Independent summer study with a professor.

Students also must complete 12 elective hours. "They can get these locally in the Detroit area. We also may allow them to put together a portfolio of their work experience for credit." Participants have worked at least 8 years after college. Tho GRE is waived, bachelor's degree is necessary. Students are held to uniform academic standards: no less than a B-; 2 C's-or-below and you're out. "This is in no way a watered-down program. The students spend an intensive amount of time with the professors, and, at the end, accumulate 42 hours of coursework, as with any other master's degree."

How It Works Twice a quarter, 6 students are bused to Athens for a 2-day stint. They take one class per quarter. Once a term, prof visits students at Ford hq. Continued communication is achieved via tele/video-conferencing. Ford pays tuition and provides bus for transportation. Students pick up costs of books, food & lodging.

Kudos So Far External affairs mgr Dick Brown says, "We are very pleased. The program is unique -- precedent setting." It's too early to tell whether the automaker will reinitiate the program in 1991.

Meanwhile, OU has been approached by other companies, including GM. "We'd be reluctant to mix the two together, not because they're competitors, but because it's beneficial to have the classes tailored exclusively to one company, using confidential company material," says Washburn. But he would consider a separate, similar program, which, if Ford signs on again, could run concurrently. The possibilities are endless. "Procter & Gamble is nearby. Perhaps it may want to consider an arrangement with us."

One concern: What about the new directions in pr which feature OD, issues mgmt, behavior motivation, etc.? Why send practitioners to a journalism school to receive a journalism degree, even if it has "pr emphasis"? Ford's Brown: "I guess the criteria we look for in pr people is writing ability. Therefore, we chose a journalism school. And facing off with the media is a big part of our pr staff's role." OU's Washburn doesn't foresee a pr degree for Scripps, academic politics & budgets being what they are. He says they were only able to implement the program by convincing administrators the journalism program wouldn't be diluted. "That doesn't mean we can't alter the courses and make them more public relations-oriented, but we can't change the degree itself."

SALARY NOW A TOP MOTIVATOR? STUDY SAYS SO, DESPITE YEARS OF FINDINGS TO THE CONTRARY

An Institute of Industrial Engineers study contradicts

reams of pr & human resources research. According to a member survey, salary & wages are a major motivator & an integral factor in workplace productivity. Granted, this is the perception of one group, industrial engineers, about what motivates another group, employees.

What Does IIE sent question
Now Motivate? naires to 2700 of its 40,000 members, got responses from 744 (27%). Ranked as the highest motivator for productivity:

- 1) Financial reward (30%), 2) Personal recognition (26%), 3) Increased responsibility (24%), 4) Pride in a job well done (18%), 5) Promotion (1%).

¶84% agree productivity would increase if employees' pay was linked to their performance & the company's profits. "Workers will produce more results when their paycheck depends on the company's bottom line."

¶75% say profit sharing & incentive programs are key to productivity.

¶But 79% feel management lacks commitment to such programs.

Training Is Essential More engineers (34%) feel education will be the biggest economic weakness in the 1990s. Says exec dir Gregory Balestrero: "Businesses must meet the immediate challenge of poorly-educated people in today's workforce by strengthening employee training programs."

¶Nearly 3/4 of the respondents attribute a poorly educated, minimally trained workforce with impeding productivity in the US. "Companies have a responsibility to train & retrain employees."

¶Conversely, 85% see new technology as an economic boon. But how good is it if no one knows how to use it?

Employee Relations Productivity Key Employees are not as productive as 10 yrs ago, say 67%. Not as motivated, say 75%. Not as loyal, say 85%. They enjoy work less and lack enthusiasm for their jobs, 75% believe. Balestrero says employees feel this way from lack of close relationship with management. "A company's best course of action is to improve employee relations thru on-the-job training & a combination of motivational & financial incentive programs." (Copy from IIE Publications Sales, 25 Technology Park/Atlanta, Norcross, Ga. 30092)

Past research shows money doesn't motivate but praise, advancement, flex schedule, etc. do. "We were surprised by this, too," comms splst Jamie Meeks told pr. "All of our previous studies have shown that other factors, such as recognition, are primary. When I saw this, I said 'Hey, they're finally getting honest.'" She speculates that with the Reagan feast over, people are realizing how important it was to them. Another reason may be that morale & recognition programs are so weak employees are placing more value on money. Management has surely set the example, now earning as much as 100 times more than average workers.