

porary setting by some of the best-known reporters & commentators, that is viewed by 10 million, in support of organization's goals.

¶Larry Foster reviews the principles that guided Johnson & Johnson's handling of the Tylenol crisis.

¶Watt, Roop & Co. assists B.F. Goodrich in its restructuring efforts.

¶Southwest Bell develops a customer support program.

Institute pres Paul Alvarez ends the film by telling viewers there are at least 150,000 public relations practitioners in the US and over 200 colleges & universities offer degrees in the field. Public relations has become a career of choice, not of accident.

**CRITIQUE** Drama form works, acting is excellent, particularly for a low budget production. Kodak's participation shows. Cases presented mostly involve sponsors or Institute board members and may not be best illustrations; some are a bit weak. Non-corporate practice isn't represented (where at least half of practitioners work) but target audience is clearly business. This may limit usefulness, or at least bias understanding of pr as a societal, not a business, function. Research is not presented as a requisite for effective pr. Having said that -- and given budget & other constraints -- this video is a most valuable addition to the "literature" and will be widely used. (\$79.95, \$49.95 for schools, from Modern Talking Picture Service, 5000 Park St. N, St. Petersburg, Fla 33709; 800/237-4599)

**"STREET SMARTS" GAINS RESPECTABILITY AS VITAL FOR MANAGERS, PR PROS**

Wagner (Fla State U) & Robert Sternberg (Yale) accept "street smarts" as a second kind of intelligence.

It has recently received academic recognition. Writing in Measures of Leadership, published by the Leadership Library of America, behavioral scientists Richard

School smarts -- the kind measured in IQ tests & some employment tests -- measures ability to learn to solve academic problems. Street smarts (practical intelligence) indicates ability to learn to solve practical problems. Hallmark of street smarts is facile acquisition of tacit knowledge -- e.g., "learning the ropes," "getting one's feet wet," "learning what goes without saying around here."

Part experience, part intuition, plus savvy & street scholarship, it's a validation of managerial folk wisdom that says a successful executive will have 10 years of experience whereas an unsuccessful one will have 1 year of experience 10 times.

"Editors who consistently bemoan the irrelevance of what they receive from many pr people will support this thesis," writes John Budd in a letter to prr. "What is transparently lacking in the young tyros in the pr business these days, in my opinion, is street scholarship. Until I read this academic support, I thought I was just being an old reminiscer. What can pr firms do? Hasn't anyone heard of 'mentoring'?"

Vol.33 No.29  
July 23, 1990

**IN AN INCREASINGLY COMPETITIVE, OVER-COMMUNICATED WORLD, 'QUIET' STANDS OUT; CAMPAIGN SHOWS THOUGHTFUL PR IDEAS WORK, ASKS ARE WE DROWNING PEOPLE WITH MESSAGES THEY CAN'T HEAR?**

"Calling ourselves the Quiet Company has proved very memorable. People read good things into it -- that we have professional agents, we're not pushy, we offer a quality product," John Caspari of Northwestern Mutual Life (Milwaukee) told prr. Company adopted the slogan 20 years ago to explain its previous paucity of self promotion. Now the Quiet Company is effectively positioning itself apart from noisy, combative competition.

**THE PROGRAM** Like Sperry's landmark "listen" campaign (pr 4/7/80), this thoughtful approach, using a basic human quality, precisely fits the company's situation. 3 years ago NML decided to dig into what quiet means via a survey of 20 execs from Fortune 1000 companies, then publicize results to "build & cement the equity in 'quiet' we already had." Research of literature on the subject found little had been written.

Interviews of the 20 execs, 1 hour each, didn't reveal anything earth-shaking, "but no one had articulated it before. We sent mailings to writers & professionals in business and received a lot of publicity." Hook was CEOs/sr mgrs of major organizations speaking on a virtually unspoken subject.

Survey findings, literature review & bibliography are compiled in 40-pg booklet, "The Power Of Quiet." Uses include:

- a) media relations;
- b) sales tool -- agents give to prospective customers which connotes the customer has "CEO timber," flatters them;
- c) part of umbrella program, "Learning The Quiet Way" -- a series of games/programs that help agents make contact with groups of people in a non-sales format, provide a "bridge to talking about insurance";
- d) link to other companies requesting copies to use as productivity tool.

California's Task Force to Promote Self-Esteem & Personal & Social Responsibility is another attempt to apply basic values in a practical way. Idea is that teaching self-esteem can impact welfare, crime, other current problems. Sponsor was tired of seeing state pour billions into "efforts to confine and/or repair" state's citizens. Work has spawned similar efforts worldwide. Its 144-pg report has sold 20,000 copies @ \$4 each.

**INTERNAL BENEFITS** "Our employees sense the qualities inherent in 'quiet,'" which is used as a productivity enhancer. "Every Wednesday is 'quiet day' in our new-business dep't. No phone interruptions. Agents can't talk to underwriters who are busy writing new policies. Underwriters are 20+% more productive as a result." Quiet week occurs at the end of each sales period -- May & December -- when the push is on for agents to submit new business. "It's working for us so we keep doing it."

**QUIET AS AN EXECUTIVE RESOURCE** According to the survey, quiet is generally defined as time alone, time apart, time to think, and time for difficult decisions. It involves focus -- the freedom to concentrate once disengaged from the demands of everyday responsibilities. It promotes receptivity to other ways of looking at a problem. It allows ideas to incubate & ripen into more comprehensive plans.

It's associated with leadership since quiet is bound up with individual reflection -- as opposed to committee decisionmaking. Says one respondent: "If you deal only in committees, very often you end up with false consensus. People tend to be driven collectively. The tendency is to go along with mass thinking and not be individualistic. The only way to challenge that is individually to go back and review what the long range plans are and how this affects it, what the gambles, risks, and rewards are."

In the wrong contexts, quiet can lead to isolation. It can magnify a problem, giving it undue significance. "You can lose touch if there's too much quiet." It also removes the exec from the necessary public spotlight. However, all execs interviewed agree quiet is an important resource.

**TACTICS TO SECURE QUIET TIME INCLUDE...**

- a) staying in the office after work hours,
- b) using holiday time or day after holidays,
- c) restricting phone calls,
- d) canceling meetings,
- e) going fishing,
- f) finding a secluded spot at the office,
- g) using travel & commuting time,
- h) organizing staff retreats or other formal periods of quiet reflection,
- i) "My secretary & I have an understanding. I don't take any appointments until 10am. I have the greatest mental energy then. Then the interruptions begin."

It's a sifting process:  
"An enormous amount of facts, figures & judgments have to pass through your mind in order to process a judgment. And judgment only comes when you're focused, and you've concentrated & prioritized. And you can only do that through a mental process that takes time & quiet. You don't want phones ringing because that interrupts the pattern."

**DIFFICULTY OF EXPLAINING TODAY'S TECHNOLOGY IS EXEMPLIFIED BY HUBBLE SPACE TELESCOPE** While media, politicians & public deride its problems, they overlook the incredible accuracy required now. NASA reports the focus flaw causing the attacks on Hubble is minute: it misses precise focus by only 4% of the diameter of a human hair!! Now try convincing investors econometric forecasts make sense. Or milk consumers that new biotech, in form of Bovine Growth Hormone, can be trusted to be safe.

The first big biotech product, BGH (or BST, Bovine Somatotropin; either name looks like a semantic problem for proponents) could do harm to all technological endeavors if trust & understanding is not gained. Washington Post echoes prr belief (10/23/89) that this controversy -- as they phrased it -- "ultimately could affect the way Americans think about science & 'progress.'" Science manufacturers have to invest as much in sophisticated public relations -- not hype & publicity -- as they do in R&D until they have earned public trust.

The true bottom line isn't technological advances or the dollars they yield. It's building trust relationships with publics so they allow you to pursue product development & profits. Until practitioners get management to understand this observable fact, both organizations & pr will suffer.

**"COMMUNICATIONS THAT COUNT" SHOWS BUSINESS PR AT ITS BEST** Modern aspects of public relations -- public affairs, community involvement, philanthropy & crisis management -- are depicted in a series of case studies in "Communications That Count," the new videotape produced by the Institute for Public Relations Research & Education. It demonstrates to corporate clients or management how "public relations substantially contributes to the bottom line."

Presented as a drama, tape shows Mr. Moran, a tough-minded CEO, asking Carla Jennings, his vp-pr, how the intangible function of public relations could produce the same bottom line results as do the tangible functions of information systems or finance. Carla responds with the following:

¶Eastman Kodak's public affairs campaign, along with other companies, convinces the federal administration to work with other nations to do something about the overvalued US dollar so exports could be increased.

¶Metpath is helped by the Pires Group to engage in "indirect lobbying" that results in regulations for the quality of medical testing equipment so a "level international playing field can be established."

¶The Principal Financial Group works with community groups to assess their needs and find resources to address them.

¶Prudential develops a strategic philanthropy program that allocates \$1 million annually in grants for causes selected by its 22,000 agents.

¶NY Bar Ass'n creates a public television program on constitutional issues & political battles in the US's 200-year history, narrated in a contem-