

27th ANNUAL SURVEY OF THE PROFESSION, PART II: SALARIES & DEMOGRAPHICS OF UPPER-LEVEL PRACTITIONERS

Tho the economy is still depressed, upper-level practitioners report their salaries are up (except in cultural org'ns, where they dropped \$3,750). Canadian practitioners report a \$4,000 median increase. The overall median salary for US respondents shows an increase over '90 of \$4,647 (Table 2). Is this sunny salary picture indicative of the profession's increasing value to employers/clients? There is some indication of this in other findings.

Noteworthy are the top-of-range earnings reported in all sectors (Table 2) but especially in hospitals (\$120,000), higher education (\$82,250), schools (\$71,318), cultural org'ns (\$70,000), social/nonprofits (\$90,000). It is over \$75,000 in all 3 levels of gov't. Clearly practitioners are valued.

There's other evidence respect for practitioners seems to be rising. Part I reported 58% of this year's respondents say they are appreciated & their role understood by their CEO -- compared to 37.5% last year. Profession's stature can also be seen in reporting structure. Table 9 shows profession is regaining some lost ground there.

TABLE 1: MEDIAN SALARIES BY AGE & GENDER

Age Groups	% of Total	% of		Median Salary		
		Men	Women	Overall	Men	Women
<u>All (US & Canada)</u>		50.6	47.7*	\$50,000	\$60,000	\$42,000
under 29	9	17.2	81.3	\$30,000	\$35,000	\$30,000
30 - 34	14	35.0	65.0	\$40,000	\$43,025	\$39,350
35 - 39	14	44.4	55.6	\$48,800	\$50,000	\$43,500
40 - 49	36	55.5	44.5	\$56,000	\$65,000	\$49,891
50 - 59	18	66.7	33.3	\$65,000	\$75,000	\$51,000
60 +	8	78.6	21.4	\$60,000	\$63,900	\$39,000
No Response	1	66.7	33.3			

* 1.7% did not indicate M/F so some categories will not total 100%



TABLE 2: UPPER-LEVEL PRACTITIONERS' CURRENT SALARIES COMPARED WITH THOSE OF PREVIOUS YEARS; GROUPED BY TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

	Median Salary		1991	Median Increase
	'91	'90	Salary Range	reported by '91 sample #
All US	\$50,000	\$45,500	\$15,500-\$250,000	\$ 4,647
All Canadian*	\$55,000	\$45,000	\$24,520-\$142,000	\$ 4,000
PR Firms	\$54,000	\$55,000	\$17,500-\$250,000	\$ 4,000
Ad Agencies	\$50,000	\$42,000	\$24,520-\$125,000	\$ 7,000
Other Consulting	\$54,500	\$56,600	\$40,000-\$120,000	\$ 3,500
Banks	\$50,000	\$42,000	\$24,500-\$117,000	\$ 4,250
Insurance	\$63,000	\$49,500	\$42,000-\$100,000	\$ 1,500
Consumer Prod Cos	\$71,529	\$48,750	\$26,000-\$150,000	\$ 6,529
Industrials	\$67,600	\$57,900	\$21,000-\$173,000	\$ 2,600
Travel/Tourism***	\$50,000	\$36,000	\$15,500-\$70,000	\$10,000
Transportation***	\$42,000	\$45,850	\$36,750-\$85,000	\$ 2,000
Utilities	\$56,000	\$53,000	\$35,000-\$115,000	\$ 7,000
Healthcare/Hosp	\$43,000	\$41,000	\$20,000-\$120,000	\$ 5,000
Healthcare/Other	\$40,000	\$46,250	\$23,000-\$98,000	\$ 5,000
Higher Education	\$42,000	\$42,584	\$23,000-\$82,250	\$ 1,596
School	\$49,500	-***-	\$24,200-\$71,318	\$ 2,750
PR Educators	\$45,000	\$39,350	\$28,000-\$63,000	\$ 3,000
Cultural Org'n	\$36,250	-***-	\$25,000-\$70,000	(\$ 3,750)
Social/Nonprofit	\$33,500	\$32,000	\$19,750-\$90,000	\$ 3,000
Government Federal	\$52,255	\$45,000	\$30,000-\$75,800	\$ 2,755
Government State	\$39,000	\$43,640	\$21,000-\$78,250	\$ 1,250
Government Local	\$42,000	\$42,000	\$17,000-\$79,800	\$ 2,000
Trade/Prof'l Ass'n	\$51,000	\$45,000	\$27,300-\$147,000	\$ 3,000
Telecommunication**	\$75,000	\$42,850	\$38,000-\$250,000	\$ 1,500
High Tech**	\$36,750	-***-	\$31,380-\$50,000	\$ 2,000
Retail/Wholesale**	\$40,000	-***-	\$25,000-\$140,000	\$ 4,000

Refers to this year's respondents' answers to "Last year's salary" question in '91 survey, not to comparison with the 1990 Survey.

* Canadian respondents were asked to state salaries in US dollars.

** Relatively small sample; may not be projectable within 10-15%.

***Category new or redefined this year so no valid comparison possible.

Total sample size is 704. Respondents hail from 50 States & D.C., 8 Provinces & the Northwest Territory.

MAJOR CHARACTERISTIC OF PROFESSION THAT DATA PORTRAYS IS VELVET GHETTO As in previous years' findings, **women predominate in the early years of practice, men at the senior levels.** Reading down the M/F columns in Table 1, note how women account for 81.3% of the "under 29" cell, then decline step-by-step until they account for only 21.4% of the "60+" group. For men it is exactly opposite: they are the majority in each category from "40-49" up -- where the responsibility, power & pay lie.

The same pattern is seen in Table 3 (years of experience) -- with a minor but illustrative difference: in the entry level "under 3 years" cell, women are less dominant (62.5%) than in the "4-5 years" group. Is this because the many cases of lawyers, strategic planners & others who are moved into top pr jobs -- therefore, entry level because no prior pr experience -- are mostly male, and thus skew the M/F ratio here?

This may explain why, overall, women earn less -- with a median salary of \$42,000 vs. men's \$60,000, a "velvet gap" of \$18,000 [which in percent of difference correlates almost exactly with PRSA's '91 study, which found a gap of \$16,356 between overall men's pay of \$53,977 v. women's \$37,621; PRSA figures are for all levels of practice, and thus lower, whereas the Annual Survey concentrates on upper-level practitioners].

But -- how explain that in Tables 1 & 3 **women are paid less in every category?**

Rationalizing that time will allow women to reach higher levels, and therefore pay equity, appears increasingly invalid when the pay gap continues year after year -- and many women have achieved top rank. It is true, however, that the most senior women (in age & experience) in this year's Survey, as in previous years, have mainly been in the same jobs in lower paying sectors a long time. Nonetheless, the disparity in pay may threaten earning power for **all** practitioners.

TABLE 3: MEDIAN SALARIES OF MEN & WOMEN BY YEARS IN PR

Years in PR	% of Total	% of		Median Salary		
		Men	Women	Overall	Men	Women
under 3 years	3.4	37.5	62.5	\$30,000	\$36,316	\$27,000
4 - 5 years	8.7	24.6	75.4	\$34,000	\$50,000	\$33,000
6 - 9 year	17.8	38.4	59.2	\$40,515	\$46,000	\$39,000
10 - 14 years	21.0	43.2	56.1	\$49,300	\$51,000	\$44,875
15 - 19 years	17.0	50.8	48.3	\$55,000	\$61,389	\$50,000
20 - 29 years	19.5	70.1	27.7	\$68,000	\$70,000	\$58,000
30 +	9.1	84.4	14.1	\$72,800	\$75,000	\$50,000
No Response	3.6	36.0	52.0			

TABLE 4: UPPER-LEVEL MEN & WOMEN BY TYPE OF ORGANIZATION**Sectors where women dominate:**

Social Agency	80.6%
PR Educators	73.7
Local Government	70.8
Healthcare/Hospital	65.9
Banks	64.7

Sectors where men dominate:

Utilities	74.4%
Insurance	69.6
Industrial Companies	65.3
PR Firms	62.2
Consumer Products	56.5
Ad Agencies	55.0

Sectors where men & women share dominance:

Trade/Professional Ass'n	52.8% men	44.4% women
Higher Education	51.9% men	48.1% women
State Government	53.3% men	46.7% women

Overall M/F *staff* ratios may or may not follow this pattern -- but this is how the *decisionmakers* in pr are confronting, or overcoming, the velvet ghetto. Approximately 9 in 10 respondents are managers or above; the remainder are primarily specialists (who have their own form of influence).

TABLE 5: SALARY BY TITLE & BY GENDER
(in descending order by group size)

Title/Level	% of Respondents	% In Each Title		Median Salary		
		Men	Women*	Overall	Men	Women
Organizations:						
Director/Head of Department	57.3	53.6	46.0	\$51,082	\$ 62,000	\$42,000
Supervisor/Mgr	25.9	38.7	57.1	\$44,500	\$ 51,000	\$42,000
VP/Assistant Exec Director	13.3	55.7	42.6	\$75,500	\$ 85,800	\$56,000
Executive/Sr VP	3.0	50.0	50.0	\$85,000	\$116,000	\$65,000
President/Exec dir	1.0	--	100.0	\$57,000	---	\$57,000
PR Firms:						
President/CEO	53.4	60.6	38.0	\$60,000	\$ 63,600	\$50,000
Vice President	21.1	64.3	32.1	\$52,500	\$ 55,000	\$50,000
Partner/Principal	9.0	66.7	25.0	\$70,000	\$ 70,000	\$50,000
Account Supervisor/Group Manager	8.3	45.5	54.5	\$38,500	\$ 36,500	\$38,500
Senior Counsel	8.3	54.5	36.4	\$50,000	\$ 50,000	\$60,000

*Some respondents did not indicate M/F; categories will not always total 100%

TABLE 6: REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

Region	Median Salaries		
	1991	1990	1989
West	\$53,600	\$47,982	\$50,000
Northeast	\$45,650	\$51,000	\$52,000
South	\$47,000	\$44,000	\$45,000
North Central	\$49,100	\$41,600	\$43,800
Canada	\$55,000	\$45,000	\$50,000

Last year's Annual Survey reported median salaries of upper-level practitioners down -- but least in the Northeast. As that region continues to suffer from recession, its salaries continue downward. Every other region rebounded above '89 levels.

TABLE 7: MEDIAN SALARIES BY EDUCATION

Level	%	Overall	Men	Women
No Degree	7	\$50,000	\$60,000	\$40,000
BS/BA	57	\$50,000	\$61,337	\$40,000
MS/MA	31	\$51,000	\$56,180	\$46,000
Ph.D	4	\$50,000	\$55,800	\$45,000

Trend since '87 of masters degrees bringing substantially more pay has slowed overall -- and does not hold for the men in this sample. The explanation may be that education counts most in getting a job & starting up the ladder, less so for promotions once a person is a known quantity & in the managerial progression. Table 8 may also hold part of the explanation. **Note again** that women earn less in each category.

TABLE 8: EDUCATION: ONE-THIRD+ OF UPPER-LEVEL PRACTITIONERS HOLD ADVANCED DEGREES

Bachelor's Degree	57%
Master's Degree	31
Some College	6
Ph.D.	4
High School	1
No Response	1

Top subjects for **bachelor's degrees** are: journalism (31%); English (13%); communications (12%); public relations (6%); political science (5%). Top subjects for **master's degrees** are: journalism (22%); communications (20%); business (12%); public relations (12%). Top subject for **doctorates** is mass communications.

TABLE 9: REPORTING TO THE CEO, SR/EXEC VP

1991	48.0%
1990	43.4
1989	48.0
1988	50.9
1987	56.2

ONE-THIRD REPORT INCREASE USE OF OUTSIDE COUNSEL & FREELANCERS

for the pr field, actually it is a result of some dismal facts:

Tho on the surface, a 31% increase in use of outside assistance (along with a 50% "stay the same") looks healthy

The increase in outside counsel and firms is explained by respondents to be a result of 1) having to reduce staff internally and 2) being asked to do more.

"Budget cuts reduced our full-time staff"
 "Shifted from goal of hiring to goal of
 building outside network"
 "Short staffed; increased use of department"

Those who say their use has "remained the same" explain they have **not** been using outside sources much over the past years. Many say they don't typically use outside help. Some say budget cuts prohibited this alternative.

TABLE 10: USE OF OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

Increased substantially	10%	}	31%
Increased somewhat	21		
Stayed same	-		50%
Decreased somewhat	11	}	14%
Decreased dramatically	3		
No Response	-		5%

But -- for firms & freelancers there's a continuing trend here; **more opportunities.**

Findings of the Annual Survey are of upper-level practitioners, defined as **supervisory or managerial positions**. While upper-level pros have advanced responsibilities & skills, this does not necessarily translate to top pay or conditions -- depending on the sector, region & organization they choose to work in. Altho response percentages by age, sector etc., seem to reflect the makeup of the field, bear in mind several charts represent **medians** of a **particular** set of respondents. There is no reliable data on the **universe** of practitioners since many still do not join professional societies; thus any sample of the field as a whole (as opposed to membership in one of the societies, for example) must apply reasonable assumptions based on experience.

DATA COMPARES EQUABLY WITH OTHER RESEARCH IN THE FIELD

Annual Survey findings validate, and in turn are validated by, the following comparisons:

- A) Educational Research Services (Arlington, Va) does a survey of **school** employees. Its overall mean figure for directors of public relations/information for '90-'91 is \$47,938; **pr**'s is \$46,969.
- B) **PRJournal** reports the median figure for **PRSA members** is \$43,718; men, \$53,977; women, \$37,621 -- compared to **pr**'s which are respectively, \$50,000; \$60,000; and \$42,000. Their sample includes all levels, ours only upper-level, and the gaps are statistically comparable.
- C) CASE, in its 1990 survey, reported an average salary figure for "advancement" professionals was \$41,981. **Higher education** respondents to **pr**'s survey report their salary last year was a mean of \$42,307, rising this year to \$44,027.
- D) Data can also be compared to **IABC's most recent Profile** ('89) which notes the average salary of its members then in the US was \$40,300; in Canada, \$41,900 (USD). That year **pr** reported \$46,000 & \$50,000 -- on target considering IABC's preponderance of younger practitioners, many in internal communications positions, v. our sample of upper-level pros.