

- Computer modeling of conflicts could help diplomats resolve problems peacefully. For example, a computer model of ethnic conflict in Russia incorporates psychological factors such as the level of antipathy between the opposing parties & their past aggressions. Computer's causal model explains the dynamics of ethnic tension, predicts possible outcomes of proposed solutions. (See pr re rough sets 4/12/93 & 10/12/93)

(\$3 from WFS, 7910 Woodmont Ave, Bethesda MD 20814; 800/989-8274)

ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE TO PROFESSIONALS

PERCEPTION SPILLOVER EFFECT ILLUSTRATED BY RADIATION TESTS. When Dep't of Energy admitted (or re-admitted, since the issue has been discussed many times before but never caught the public's interest) that radiation tests were performed at the height of the Cold War on some patients who were not told what was happening, AIDS researchers at Johns Hopkins said their work was hampered by lack of volunteers. One celebrated case, and mistrust of all medical research results. **Add perception spillover to the elements of risk management.** Also to environmental scans. [Perhaps pr's biggest social contribution will be to help people learn to be more discerning, and therefore less paranoid -- thru new heights of public education.]

CUSTOMER-ORIENTED MEDIA DIRECTORY ATTEMPTS TO PREVENT WASTED TIME & MONEY. Survey responses from nearly 600 media contacts tell how each likes to be contacted, what topics they cover. Also includes a) editorial descriptions of the pub'ns; b) headlines of recent articles written by reporters at nat'l newspapers -- "Reporters often tell pr professionals to read their stories if they want to know what they cover. To make this easier, we provide names of key writers, as well as angles they have covered on many recent health & medical topics," explains Ray Daniels of Caduceus Communications. c) Extensive local tv & radio listings -- to show who makes decisions about healthcare stories among local media. *Caduceus 94: The Health & Medical Media Directory* lists 1600 media contacts who specialize in health & medical coverage. (Caduceus Communications, 1300 West Belmont Ave, Ste 402, Chi 60657; 312/665-1300, fax 312/665-0699)

CANCER PATIENT ADVOCACY GROUPS FIND WAY TO GET AHEAD OF INFO LAG. These activists are gearing up to mobilize corporate America to their cause. Because professionals make up 40% of these groups, corporate partnering offers opportunities to communicate with both consumer & professional audiences. Survey by Medicus Intercon PR shows groups have pioneered a way of getting the latest info to patients: they send representatives to medical meetings to hear reports of cutting-edge research that may not yet have been published. All have membership & targeted newsletters or other publications. Groups plan to use pr & adv'g to take their message to the people. Many have acquired sophisticated office technology & brought aboard professional staff to engage in large-scale programs to enhance rather than replace physician counseling. Groups perceive corporate services & dollars as interchangeable forms of support. More than 80% say money is an issue; the same percentage rate video & print production services among their top needs. (More from MIPR, 1675 Broadway, NYC 10019-5809; 212/468-3100)

MAKING PR WRITING PART OF THE BEHAVIORAL MODEL

A pr planning process which merges issues anticipation/management with behavior change principles is proposed in a new book by counselor Kerry Tucker, consultant Doris Derelian & educator Donna Rouser. Its behavioral outline helps design message strategies that break thru communication clutter to generate public support. Applying behavioral principles to pr writing suggests the following methodology:

- **The route a successful message takes to change behavior:**

1. Message is transferred to personal, real-life needs, concerns or interests. Connections to real-life situations cause attention to the message.
2. Intention (to act) is triggered by an individual's own analysis of perceived benefits & consequences.
3. The message is processed against past experience & perceived expectations of success or failure, and behavioral decisions (to act or not act) are made.
4. Behavior change occurs.
5. Values & attitudes are formed.

- **Communication content organized around the 4 questions of the behavioral framework** increases the odds for achieving behavioral goals & objectives. The 4 questions are:

1. Does the communication raise a public concern, need or interest?
2. Is your desired behavior clearly packaged as a credible solution to the need, concern or interest?
3. Have you clearly presented the benefits of action and the consequences of inaction?
4. Have you helped the receiver mentally rehearse the desired behavior?

The business letter is among the most credible tactics in public relations, particularly when coming from opinion leader to opinion leader or opinion leader to members of a public. [Ed note: Edward L. Bernays used this direct, unmediated technique with startling success for decades -- often substituting handwritten personal letters from average people to opinion leaders to get their interest or support on an issue. In the first project I worked with him on, such letters changed a US president's mind.]

- **Content credibility is critical.** The desired behavior must be believable -- as must the message, spokesperson & writing style.
- **The use of metaphors, similes & analogies** enhances the transfer of communications content to real-life public experiences.
- **Most people need help transferring information to behavior.** *Mental rehearsal* helps individuals see & feel for themselves what you are encouraging them to do. The writing must supply or stimulate it.

(Public Relations Writing, An Issues-Driven Behavioral Approach, Prentice Hall; 382 pgs. Order from Rosemary Chuirazzi at 201/592-2000)

POINT-OF-BEHAVIOR COMMUNICATION IS THE NEW IDEAL

It's immediate & effective. MADD's red ribbon campaign is an example. Tied on a vehicle, it's a forceful reminder at the point of behavior not to drive drunk. Research has proven its effectiveness. (See pr 1/15/90 & 12/24/90)

G.D. Searle is using an effective point-of-behavior communication piece -- a 4x7" card, plastic so it can hang in the shower, explaining "5 Simple Steps to Monthly Breast Self-Examination" in English & Spanish on opposite sides. Distributed by sales reps to doctors along with other patient education items (audiovisuals, booklets, etc) that accompany Searle's product Demulen.

Not all products or desired behaviors have such convenient applications as this one. "This is unique: there's a very specific action & a specific time it's best done. That's why it works so well," Jeff Newton, dpa, told pr. Nonetheless point-of-behavior must be the ideal of all communication.

"It's the most requested Demulen patient education item we have. Doctors really like it. We have a good response from patients, too. It serves as a reminder to do the breast exam monthly; it hangs in a place where the woman feels more comfortable about doing it; & the body should be wet when examined," Marty Haack at G.D. Searle told pr.

SEMANTIC GUIDANCE FROM HISPANIC/LATINO COMMUNITY

Which is the preferred term: *Hispanic* or *Latino*? US Census Bureau uses *Hispanic*. LATimes uses *Latino*. In an informal phone survey, pr found *Hispanic* used more often. But as an Arizona school practitioner told pr: "It's not enough to use one term. People see themselves differently. We can't use a blanket approach to communicate with families. We need to be culturally sensitive."

LA Times' *Guidelines on Ethnic & Racial Identification* states this directive:

Latino is "the preferred umbrella term for Spanish-surnamed groups in the US, including Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Central Americans & South Americans. A *Latino* woman is a *Latina*. Keep in mind that *Latino* is an ethnic group, not a race category. Latinos may be of any race: they are white, black, Native American, Asian, mestizo, etc. Some speak Spanish; some don't. Some are US born, others are immigrants. The Census Bureau & many newspapers use *Hispanic* rather than *Latino*. A compromise in aligning Census information with LATimes style is to refer once to the fact that the Census uses *Hispanic*. Otherwise, use *Latino*. Use *Hispanic* only in quotes or in proper names."

Comments from other sources:

"We use *Hispanic* because it doesn't alienate people from the Iberian Peninsula. *Latino* is Spanish for Latin -- it just includes people from Latin America, not Spanish or Portuguese who are also Hispanics in this country." -- US Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

"*Latino* is the Spanish word which means *Hispanic*. When we are addressing Spanish speaking people, we use the word *Latino* because they prefer it. When we address the English speaking population, we use *Hispanic*." -- National Federation of Hispanic Owned Newspapers

WORLD FUTURE SOCIETY OFFERS THIS YEAR'S OUTLOOK REPORT

Selections are not those deemed most likely to happen. They're chosen because they are plausible (based on current trends) & interesting. Some of the 74 predictions among 11 categories:

- **Business & the Economy.** Employers may use aromas in the future to get more work out of their employees. Already, large-scale fragrancing is being applied in Japan to clean the air in office buildings, hotels, hospitals & other environments. Studies indicate workers can perform certain tasks significantly better when specific aromas, such as peppermint, lavender & citrus, are diffused thru their environments.
- Businesses, research laboratories, artists' studios, museums, science centers & other facilities will prepare "learning modules" that are then "plugged in" to schools' walls. Schools will be more flexible & stimulating, and learning will take place anywhere.
- Creativity is becoming increasingly important to business managers. Because most managers learned only critical or analytical thinking in business school, many are now turning to creativity-enhancing computer software to help them see & understand the business world in a new way.
- **Health.** In coming years, doctors will be able to look inside of cells & detect abnormalities at the molecular level even before symptoms occur. Prevention of disease will become the most important part of medicine.
- **World Affairs.** Immigration will pump US population to 383 million by 2050, & population will continue growing well beyond that time. US has the fastest-growing population in the industrialized world.