

¶ **Larry Weber**, pres, The Weber Group, Cambridge, Mass: "Need to embrace technology."

¶ **Ruthann Grey**: "Need to build resilience and help employees develop confidence to respond to change."

Peter Hollister, in his session on Managing the Public Relations Team, summarized. The work environment is changing; today's new employees want different things than new employees years ago -- there is a new sense of loyalty, job does not rank among top priorities anymore; flextime & comp-time allow younger staff to adapt work style to lifestyle (kids, etc...).

ITEMS OF IMPORTANCE TO PROFESSIONALS

¶ **A LANDMARK TO THE OVERRIDING POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS** was visited by Conference attendees -- the touted new Oriole Park at Camden Yards. While guides told of the cost of various elements of the classy baseball stadium, and how many hundreds of thousands a full house brings in, the visitors were recalling that there were no ball games held the last portion of the season -- because relationships between owners & players were so bad they resulted in a strike. Showing again that the real bottom line is relationships, from which dollars flow (or, in this case, don't flow).

¶ **THERE IS A DISCONNECT BETWEEN SAYING (OVER & OVER) THAT 1-ON-1, FACE-TO-FACE PROGRAMS ARE THE NEED** and attendance at professional development sessions offering concrete programs. Face-to-face was clearly the overarching theme of conference speakers, as well as the talk of the anterooms. But Jack Pyle's pre-conference course on Win-Win Negotiating canceled due to lack of registration. Sessions on sophisticated face-to-face programs were not overcrowded.

¶ *Of related interest:* PRSA still promotes, by offering PD sessions every year, the discredited idea that counting clips in one way or another is valid evaluation. This is the equivalent of sales dep'ts offering number of sales calls made to justify their worth. That would be laughed right out of the management meeting; all that counts is sales, not sales calls. Similarly, pr must report what behaviors were motivated by media coverage (and everything else it does).

WHO WHO'S IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

ELECTED. Debra Miller won the contested election for PRSA treasurer over the official nominee, Janice Newman. A first, but it's only the second time an election has been contested.

U Maryland) & Walt Lindenmann (dir research & measurement, Ketchum, NYC) awarded Jackson Jackson & Wagner Behavioral Science Prize by PRSA Foundation. Prize recognizes their contributions to behavioral science research that pr professionals should be using in their work.

HONORS. Larissa Grunig (assoc prof,

PRSA STUDIES VERIFY OLD SOCIAL CONTRACT IS CRUMBLING

Two studies -- by 1) Roper Starch Worldwide & 2) Ctr for the Study of American Business -- commissioned by PRSA for its 47th national conference, look at the condition of the American workplace. The old social contract is crumbling, they find -- not only in the workplace but between gov't & taxpayers, public & press, doctor & patient. The problem exists down in the ranks, where people feel cut off from the elites who run things. Evidence:

1. **The anti-incumbent mood** that just got played out at the polls.
2. **Growth of new media formats such as call-in talk shows** -- which are basically for venting anger & frustration, by both hosts & callers.
3. **In the workplace**, the percentage of Americans who say they are satisfied with their jobs has fallen to the lowest level in the 21 yrs Roper has asked the question. Top 5 reasons why morale among workers isn't higher are:
 - (A) pay increases too small, 28%;
 - (B) inadequate communication between workers & mgmt, 19%;
 - (C) too few chances for promotion/advancement, 18%;
 - (D) troublemakers in the org'n, 14%;
 - (E) fringe benefits not good, 13%.
4. While trust in the elite has eroded, **individuals see themselves as the source for solutions** "thru their individual actions." A Roper survey ranks different entities' ability to solve the nation's problems:

	1987	1993
Public-interest groups	Not asked	57%
State governors	60%	54
"Individual Americans"	Not asked	53
Local city officials	54	52
The president	49	46
State legislatures	56	46
Administration officials	44	37
Congress	52	36

Does top ranking for public interest groups, combined with GOP landslide, augur a new era of insurgent activism?



HONEST 1-ON-1 COMMUNICATION NEEDED

It's the key to developing a new workplace compact, according to Kenneth Chilton & Murray Weidenbaum of Center for the Study of American Business. Their study cites a recent survey of business execs by Arthur D. Little: **64% say major barrier to successful change is the failure to convince mgrs & employees that change is necessary in the first place.** Most agreed on what is **not** useful: training, distributing publications, changing the compensation system. Instead they prefer more individual-oriented actions:

- communication direct from the CEO
- departmental meetings
- recognition of individual or group performance
- staff changes such as hirings, terminations, promotions & transfers
- 1-on-1 discussions
- employee focus groups or surveys
- changes in the performance appraisal process

DIALOGUE, NOT OUTBOUND MESSAGES

Key to making the change from hierarchical to team-based org'ns is to substitute top-down communications with *dialogue*, according to Dan Yankelovich. "Genuine dialogue occurs when both sides modify their positions to accommodate each other.... The process of dialogue is far different from selling or persuading or educating or imparting information," he explains. Most org'ns know how to do this at high levels, but not between the top level & lower levels. It's thru dialogue that a new social contract will be forged.

TOWARD A NEW SOCIAL CONTRACT

Restoring trust & credibility should have highest priority. To do this, managers must learn how to "tell it like it is." CSAB offers this Outline for a New Social Contract:

Employer Expectations of Employees

- Performance to the best of one's ability
- Commitment to the objectives of the organization
- Participation (suggestions)
- Willingness to take training to improve productivity
- Ethical & honest behavior

- Security tied to company finances & ability to perform
- Respect, recognition & participation
- Opportunities for growth
- Access to timely information & openness by candid leaders
- Safe & healthy workplace

Joint Expectations**Employee Expectations of Employers**

- "Fair" pay & benefits proportionate to contribution to company success

- Partnering replaces paternalism
- Employees are value-adding resources, not merely costs to be cut
- Employee & employer must focus on customer needs & desires

"Both employers & employees must come to understand that the highly competitive environment in which they find themselves binds them together."

NEW PR PARADIGM SEEN AS A MATTER OF SURVIVAL

"Organizational Survival: Connecting With The New American Values," was the conference theme of the Baltimore event. From the plenary sessions to many of the workshops, the importance of 1-on-1, face-to-face communication was stressed again & again -- pr's contribution to organizational survival.

- ¶ **Murray Weidenbaum**, plenary speaker: "Effective communication is based on dialogue. Management needs to learn to listen."
- ¶ **Counselor Kerry Tucker**: "Creating dialogue is a powerful technique for changing behavior."
- ¶ **John Pachtner**, sr mgr, Levi Strauss & Co: "Face-to-face is the single most effective way to communicate. One-way doesn't work with complex issues, people need to be able to ask & answer questions."
- ¶ **Counselor Peter Hollister**: "One-way communication is no longer valid. Interactive television, face-to-face meetings are key."
- ¶ **Ruthann Grey**, vp-comms & pa, Hoechst Celanese: "Face-to-face communication with employees to deliver messages. Newsletters should not be the messenger."
- ¶ **John Gamble**, managing partner, The Tenac Group/Southeast USA: "Ask & listen to what your client's expectations are."
- ¶ **Pat Jackson**, Jackson Jackson & Wagner: "Practitioners who help sr mgrs succeed where they're now failing -- in getting supervisors to be the key communicators, in getting frontline workers to deliver customer delight, in designing symbolic actions that illuminate vision & values -- are the ones who'll be invited behind the closed mahogany door of the dominant coalition that runs the organization."

THOUGHTS ON WHAT THE "NEW AMERICAN VALUES" ARE

Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Harvard prof & business author, feels the old contract of long-term relationships based on hierarchies & the illusion of making progress as you climb the ladder, has been replaced with the need for the current job to prepare for the next job. The old thought of corporate loyalty equating obedience has been replaced by new professional standards of increased productivity driving employees. It's a shift from employment security to employability security (Weidenbaum also said this).

In the new social contract, the real partnering is between customers & suppliers -- the power has shifted to the customer. Key to mastering the new game is applying the **6 F's: Service must be Fast, Focused, Flexible, Friendly, and should also provide Fun & Fulfillment** to employees.

Panel commenting on Kanter's remarks added these thoughts:

- ¶ **John Paluszek**, pres, Ketchum Public Affairs, NYC: "There is a need for empathy, to reach out, show sensitivity."