

of these agencies in support of the program helped make it a success," Neil Vineberg told pr.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- To attract needy patients to receive screenings & eyeglasses.
- To achieve public outreach at the lowest cost in terms of adv'g & promotion, offsetting costs wherever possible to local service partners.
- To build credibility for the program among gov't & social service agencies, social service groups, educators, patients.
- To familiarize targeted publics with the program.
- To bring attention to Hershey Foods' role as sponsor.
- To generate local publicity that would help MORR-SIGHT attract future financing.

MANAGED DISTRIBUTION

1. Partners (community groups, schools, social service agencies, etc) were sought in the counties or cities where the program was to operate.
2. Partners were asked to volunteer their services to:
 - a) identify & inspect distribution sites (churches, schools, etc);
 - b) conduct outreach;
 - c) schedule patient appointments;
 - d) manage patient flow at sites.
3. "Working with partners helped us offset the cost of attracting & administering these patients. The partners handled this work as part of their regular business."

Program is drawing 30-50 clients per day -- "the exact number targeted" -- to the mobile eye care clinic/lab in each of the counties on the tour, which continues thru April 1995. (Info from Vineburg at 718/760-0333)

IDEAS FOR PROMOTING DIVERSITY

- 1) **Luncheons featuring ethnic or national foods.** "I felt it was important to start with things people have in common, and one of them is food," says Thomas Cairns, dir employee rels at NBC subsidiary WTVJ Miami-Fort Lauderdale. Held several times a year, "the luncheons are the best-attended functions we have as an organization." Sometimes they're catered, sometimes employees bring dishes representing their culture or ethnic heritage. Has also sponsored a multicultural dessert contest.
- 2) A "diversity calendar" in Lockheed's employee newspaper alerts workers to in-house functions. All employees are eligible to submit info. (From new monthly, Workforce Diversity, 350 W Hubbard St, Chi 60610; 312/464-0300)

WHAT'S BEST: WORKERS LOYAL TO COMPANY OR UNIT?

New study of workplace loyalty again raises the issue of "locus of commitment. Typically, when commitment is studied, it's commitment to the organization. It disregards the fact that **what's important to many employees might be their work group or supervisor,**" Robert Billings (Ohio State) told pr of his research with Thomas Becker (Washington State).

"People aren't necessarily committed to the organization or top management. They may be committed more locally to their work group or supervisor. Under some circumstances, that may lead to certain kinds of outcomes that are positive -- even more so than being committed to the overall organization" (see last 2 items under Findings).

STUDY DEVELOPED 4 PROFILES OF COMMITMENT:

- 1) **Locally Committed** -- attached to their supervisor & work group; mid-point in job satisfaction & intent to quit.
- 2) **Globally Committed** -- attached to top management & the organization; also mid-point in job satisfaction & intent to quit, not significantly different from Locally Committed.
- 3) **Committed** -- attached both locally & globally; have *highest overall job satisfaction*, lowest intent to quit.
- 4) **Uncommitted** -- not attached locally or globally; lowest job satisfaction, highest intent to quit.

FINDINGS

- Commitment to Local or Global level is positive, but not as strong as commitment to both.
- Uncommitted have lowest level of prosocial organizational behavior -- "behavior intended to promote the welfare of the organization or individuals & groups within the organization."

Further complication:
"scientific" workers like researchers, medical professionals, engineers, academics are often more committed to *their discipline than to their employer*. Physicists or sociologists, for instance, may care more about how their work is received by the physics or sociological community than by the organization for which they work.

- Committed engage in prosocial organizational behavior more often than the Uncommitted & Globally Committed, but don't differ significantly from the Locally Committed.
- Locally Committed have higher localized job satisfaction & higher local prosocial behaviors than the Globally Committed & don't differ significantly from the Committed.
- Committed & Locally Committed are more likely to be in teams than either the Uncommitted or Globally Committed.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MANAGERS & COMMUNICATORS

1. This typology can be used in a needs assessment to help identify employees whose commitment profiles have negative implications for the company, supervisor, or work group.
2. This diagnosis could then be used to develop interventions (including orientation, training, participative activities & communications targeting) designed to improve the level or form of commitment.
3. For example, a company having problems due to low cooperation within work groups should attempt to heighten commitment to the supervisor & co-workers, rather than to top management or the organization overall.

Researchers are continuing their study thru a 2-year grant from Army Research Institute. They're tracking graduates from both Washington State & Ohio State over time as they enter the workforce. "We want to understand where different commitments come from. And down the road we'll measure some outcomes of commitment, particularly in terms of performance," Billings told prr. (For copy of 2 papers, write prr)

ACADEMIC RESEARCH: WORTH WADING THRU?

Academic papers, like the one cited above, can be a tough read. Their arcane language inhibits understanding -- for the nonacademic. But don't be put off by it. There's still much of value to practitioners. It's true of any group's communication. Get past the jargon -- barriers to those on the outside, meaningful to those in the know -- & useful info can be discovered.

In defense of academic language, Billings notes: "What for an outsider is difficult, for people in the field often means precision. In public relations you have your own jargon. When you write or talk to other people in your profession, you use terms the rest of us would not be familiar with. And when you explain that term versus some other word, we would say 'Oh, I can see the distinction, but I don't see why it's important.' Once you get into any discipline, distinctions can be very important. Sometimes you could write them in clear English, but you write to the audience for which it's intended."

PRSIG, ORIGINAL COMPUTER FORUM, HAS 20,000 MEMBERS

After 10 years of being online (accessed via CompuServe), PRSIG has 12 ass't system operators ("sys ops") located around the world who help run the forum, & 18 sections dedicated to various activities in public relations, marketing, advertising, research, direct mail. What it offers:

- **Educational programs** are PRSIG's most exciting opportunity, feels Ron Solberg, PRSIG's "wizard sys op" -- CompuServe's term for the one in charge, frequently a forum's founder. "We have online discussions with presenters that go for a week or two focusing on a particular area of interest. Recently, Lee Levitt did one on cold calling. He held court for almost 2 weeks responding to many, many messages. Then we saved the entire exchange & put it in the library for those who couldn't make the discussion. Lee's has been read almost 400 times since it went in the library."
- **Presentations** are based on interest. "A bulletin board is a dynamic survey instrument. You can tell immediately the interest by the number of messages (message threads) around a particular subject."
- **New sections** get developed when there's a "critical mass" of interested users. Various organizations have sections: PRSA, IABC, Qualitative Research Consultants Ass'n.
- **Job listings:** "We probably have the largest list of job opportunities for communications professionals. At any given time, we have nearly 200 posted, & we keep it current."

"Initially, I'd get on & nobody else would be there. I'd ask a question, then go back later & answer it myself just to keep things going. At that time, CompuServe had only 30-40,000 subscribers. Today it has close to 2 million. Puts it in perspective," Solberg told prr.

PRSIG is "a library of people. They make it what it is -- exchanging thoughts with one another in areas they're interested in. What makes this exciting is our numbers -- 20,000 people. And that's a purged list. Every month I purge those who haven't accessed it for a time." (Info from Solberg at Easycom, 1032 61st St, Downers Grove, Ill. 60516; 708/969-1441)

WHEN PR'S ROLE IS SETTING WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

MORR-SIGHT -- a program that offers free eye screenings & prescription glasses -- received a \$500,000 grant from Hershey Foods, in association with Pennsylvania Ass'n for the Blind, to distribute eyeglasses to people thruout the state who couldn't otherwise afford them. Vineberg Communications (Forest Hills, NY) developed a partnership program it calls "**managed distribution**" that gets the exams & glasses to those who need them as expeditiously as possible.

"Managed distribution shifts the administrative burden & cost of attracting patients & running the program to our partners -- the public sector organizations whose clients benefit from the program. The enthusiasm