

- These results were cross-tabulated with responses to the question, "In terms of overall reputation, where does your org'n fall within your industry?" Findings:
  - Employees who believe their orgn's reputation is in the bottom third were most likely to compare its thinking power to a Yugo.
  - Those choosing the middle third were most likely to compare their orgn's thinking power to a Mack Truck.
  - Top third chose a Ford Taurus.
  - Very few chose the Ferrari -- tho that's what the most effective org'ns demonstrate is needed to have a competitive advantage.

**Allegory:** a representation of an abstract or spiritual meaning thru concrete or material forms; a symbolic narrative.

**Metaphor:** the application of a word or phrase to an object or concept which it does not literally denote, in order to suggest comparison with another object or concept.

## ANOTHER IMPORTANT LESLY CONTRIBUTION RECALLED

As PRSA pres in '80, Pat Jackson with his board saw an opportunity to pull the frazzling strands of pr together by a study of commonalities. The field was dividing into specialties: public affairs, investor relations, consumer affairs, employee com'ns et al ad inf -- each going its own way. To lead the effort, they tapped Phil Lesly.

His Blue Ribbon Report -- independent as always, he did most of the work himself & only passed it by the committee of heavy hitters for final review -- enunciated a positioning of the field that remains a basic tenet:

*Practitioners, the report said, are united by the fact they are always -- whatever title is used -- "in the middle." They help form policy inside & then communicate it outside. Then they bring back inside the response & ideas of groups outside. This ability to negotiate between the interested stakeholders is a unique function, allowing pr to add immense value to organizations of every type.*

No one was aware Phil Lesly was even ill when we got the news of his death (pr 5/5). For good reason. His illness was a shocking surprise as well to Phil & wife Virginia. He complained of indigestion on Friday, the next day learned he had a virulent form of leukemia and died Monday. He "accepted it like a gentleman," Virginia told pr. He left behind the next managing the human climate which will run with pr in July.

## WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

**HONORS.** Ann Barkelew (Fleishman-Hillard, Mpls) is the 2nd inductee to the Rowan College PR Hall of Fame.

## IS VOLUNTEERISM, VITAL TO EVERY ORGANIZATION, SAGGING ?

The volunteerism "summit" in Philadelphia April 27-29 brought heightened awareness to the subject. PR pros already know its value in relationship building -- internally & externally -- & in problem-solving teams. Many have convinced their org'ns of its bottomline importance -- since research shows it pays off. E.g. a Conference Board study found:

- 77% of companies say volunteer programs benefit strategic goals
- 80% agree such programs improve employee retention & enhance training
- 90% say they build teamwork, improve morale, attract better employees

At the time of the survey, more than 50% acknowledged a connection between volunteer programs & profitability (pr 5/10/93).

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRUST & CIVIC / ORG'L ENGAGEMENT

Are we becoming socially disengaged? Surveys have found a steady decline in social trust, notes Pew Research

Center. *Trust & Citizen Engagement in Metro Philadelphia* is its summit-linked study of area residents & a parallel nationwide study focusing on trust, citizen engagement & their interrelationship. Results indicate there is a "considerable reservoir of social capital" across the US:

- **People are more wary than distrusting.** 54% say they can't be too careful in dealing with other people. 64% believe other people try to be fair (rather than take advantage); & 57% say people try to be helpful (rather than just look out for themselves).
- **Social distrust is higher in the city than in its suburbs.** Most city residents are cautious of strangers, neighbors, co-workers & casual acquaintances. Substantially more distrust exists among blacks than whites. Education & age are factors: the older, more educated & more affluent are more trusting. At the other extreme, poorly educated young whites & young blacks are extremely distrustful of other people.
- **Those who are highly distrustful are civically disengaged** -- but other aspects of their lives also contribute. For the moderately distrustful, this attitude is not a barrier to good citizenship. Among the college educated, for example, a belief that "one can make a difference," or whether or not one's parents volunteered, are each more relevant than trust to their level of civic engagement.
- **Investment counts.** For those who didn't attend college & non-whites, owning a home is more relevant to civic engagement than is trust level.



- Who is trusted?

	% Who Trust Each A Lot Philadelphia	National
<u>Interpersonal:</u>		
Family members	84	84
People at place of worship	59	57
Your boss	51	51
Co-Workers	45	41
Fellow club members	42	41
Neighbors	42	45
Store clerks where you shop	28	30
<u>Institutional:</u>		
Fire dep't	78	78
Police dep't	48	46
Public schools	33	32
Local tv news	27	24
Local daily newspaper	19	22
City or local gov't	14	14
Federal gov't in Washington	8	6
State gov't	8	9

- Parental warnings against trusting strangers damaging.** It's the most important family background factor in how much people trust others -- more important than a divorce in the family or even recollections of a family member being victimized by crime. 43% of those under 30 report their parents often cautioned them not to trust certain kinds of people; 34% of 30-49 year olds; 27% of 50+.
- Empowerment matters most.** 70% of Philadelphians think they can have an impact on making their communities better places to live. 60% say they can contact a local official directly with a problem (rather than an intermediary). 60% say they can organize their neighborhoods to deal with a neighborhood problem. 53% of parents with school children say they know how to get things done at their schools if needed.
- Can even change city hall.** 40% have tried to get their local gov't to address a concern. 25% have tried more than once. Of these, 51% report success in the effort. 41% of Phila residents have helped to organize neighbors to fix or improve a problem in their community. Of them, 85% report success. 45% of parents sought to solve some problem in schools, & of them 79% say they were successful.
- Knowing how matters.** Trust in local institutions, e.g. public schools, is related to parents' beliefs about being able to get things accomplished at their child's school. 61% who said they had "a lot" of trust in schools also said they would know how to get something changed at their child's school if need be, compared to 48% of other parents.

**Bad research.** Pew feels the rate of interpersonal distrust has been exaggerated in surveys due to the context in which the questions have been asked -- the trust question follows questions about crime. Distrust of institutions, however, is consistently high in all surveys.

(More: Pew Research Ctr, 1875 Eye st, NW, DC 20006; 202/293-3126; fax 202/293-2569)

### WHO TO TAP AS COMMUNITY OR INTERNAL VOLUNTEERS

The study found a 3-way relationship between empowerment, trust & civic participation. While trust has little *direct* relationship to civic engagement, it has an *indirect* impact thru feelings of empowerment.

- **People who both trust others & feel empowered are highly engaged in civic activities.** Same must apply to volunteering inside org'ns.

But -- it is also true that a number of empowered respondents are not particularly trusting of others. Empowerment can exist separately from trust. 30% of those with very low interpersonal trust feel they can have a big impact on their community; 22% say they can have a moderate impact.

### MANAGERS' RESISTANCE KEEPS INTERNAL COM'N PROGRAMS 1-WAY

*Ragan Report* (5/5/97) reports "...top mgrs are 'galled,' as one put it, by irrational, uninformed, mean-spirited accusations by employees." Do mgrs think employees' thoughts disappear if not given the chance to be expressed?

The newsletter, whose original purpose was covering employee com'ns, lists these obstacles (gathered at a roundtable discussion at one of its conferences) to building face-to-face programs:

- 1) "Many mgrs & supervisors don't understand the first thing about com'n";
- 2) "At many companies, employees work in remote locations or on the road";
- 3) "Some companies are either growing or downsizing so fast that it's hard to organize face-to-face meetings";
- 4) "Many mgrs just plain think employees aren't worth talking to";
- 5) "And let's not forget, at some companies -- especially heavily unionized firms -- employees aren't worth talking to."

If such disrespect for employees is the prevailing attitude, it's not surprising mgrs don't like the upward feedback they're receiving.

### TECHNIQUE: METAPHORS & ALLEGORIES STILL WORK WELL

They punctuate information. Kepner-Tregoe's study of employee use of brain-power (pr 5/12) used this one involving cars & trucks:

- Hourly workers & managerial respondents compared the speed & quality of their orgn's overall thinking ability to the following vehicles:

Yugo (24% hrly, 10% mgrs)	Mack Truck (35% hrly, 34% mgrs)
Ford Taurus (34% hrly, 48% mgrs)	Ferrari (7% hrly, 8% mgrs)