

20 POSSIBLE INSTRUMENTS OF COMMUNICATION

Here are a few of the most valuable to help

satisfy "the insatiable appetite credibility has for constant nourishment. Starve it at your peril."

1. **Codify vision & mission statement.** Create dignified pamphlet for distribution to investors as well as employees. Write plainly; no hyperbole or ambiguities.
2. **Quarterly status report.** Most effective when done as informal, narrative letter. Candor counts.
3. **Memorandum on competitors.** A helpful perspective for investors if it is straight-forward without bias.
4. **Profiles of key staff.** Helps humanize organization & increases comfort level.
5. **Circulate analyst reports.** Not all investors will see all such reports. Distribute, with comments if needed, positive as well as negative reports, the latter accompanied by candid comments.
6. **Coffee klatches.** Occasional meeting with 2-3 investors in various cities as events warrant.
7. **Open house.** Create an annual event.
8. **Policy of personal notes to key investors.** Find occasions to send short, informal notes.
9. **Produce technical trade periodical article.** Circulate to investors with lay language synopsis. Reinforces confidence in technical capability.

(Copy from Omega Group, 32 E. 38th st, NYC 10016; 212/545-0190)

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PROFESSIONALS

Some illuminating stats on pr: It's 1 of 10 industries with the fastest projected job growth from '94 - '05, according to US Bureau of Labor Statistics. PRSA's recent membership survey asserts (based on one orgn's membership) that 60% of practitioners are now female. Minorities still haven't discovered the opportunity pr offers: 93% of pr pros are Caucasian.

Free video of a "new media" conference. "Targeting Your Message In the Age of New Media" features 2 panel discussions, each followed by Q&A. Part 1 panelists discuss "News on the Net: Who's Tuned In?" Part 2 looks at "TV in the Information Age: What's Ahead?" "This videotape provides constructive information, as well as genuine, unique perspectives from the people who are truly leading this new industry," says Mark Dembo of West Glen Communications. Since tape covers over 2 hrs of conference discussion, it's suggested viewers watch it in large groups, then follow with discussion. "It will certainly get people thinking about this vast new media opportunity." (Free from West Glen at 212/921-2800 or 800/325-8677)

ENLISTING THE UPCOMING GENERATION TO LOBBY YOUR POSITION

To protect its not-for-profit status at a time when the government is searching for ways to increase federal tax revenues, Lutheran Brotherhood (LB) needs to help Congress understand the breadth & effectiveness of its programs. This is a major public affairs challenge for fraternal org'ns.

Its RespecTeen *Speak For Yourself* curriculum & RespecTeen National Youth Forum puts LB representatives & program beneficiaries (young people from each state) face to face with more than 160 members of Congress. Program is now in its 9th year.

OBJECTIVES To be effective, the program cannot be seen as self-serving. Its primary objective is to provide a positive & motivating experience for students -- helping them understand the democratic process & empowering them to make a difference within that process. By keeping that objective on top, LB meets its secondary objective -- building congressional awareness of LB's philanthropic initiatives.

RESEARCH KEEPS THE PROGRAM FRESH These data were generated:

- **Surveyed teachers** who used the classroom materials in past years to evaluate & revise the curriculum.
- **Gathered media clips** to review previous years' event coverage & story angles.
- **Reviewed a recent survey of members of Congress** & letters regarding the program to keep their needs top of mind thruout the planning process.
- **Reviewed student, parent & RespecTeen Nat'l Youth Forum staff surveys** from past years to make sure the program is providing a positive experience for all who participate.
- **Interviewed judges from past years** to devise ways to make sure the process rewards the most deserving students.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS & KEY TACTICAL GOALS

1. **Curriculum/letter-writing contest** is mailed to 50,000 7th & 8th grade social studies teachers nationwide. Final component of the curriculum asks students to write their US representative about an issue of concern to them. More than 15,000 did.



- 2. **Meetings between students & their representatives & senators** strengthen Congressional relations. 158 were arranged last year.
- 3. **RespectTeen National Youth Forum** brings students to Washington for educational sessions & congressional meetings, with on-site support from LB.
- 4. **Local & national media** are provided with timely info regarding the program & 51 state winners, their issues & their members of Congress. Significant publicity is generated by such hometown personality stories, which enhances the luster of members of Congress among their constituencies & raises awareness of the RespectTeen program, its winners & their issues.
- 5. **Winner notification** includes an info packet explaining the program to parents, and a follow-up phone call to make personal contact & answer any questions.
- 6. **Meetings of students & members of Congress** who author key bills are set up -- giving the state winners an opportunity to discuss their views on pending legislation.
- 7. **Evaluation** includes conducting staff & parent/winner surveys; summary of congressional meetings; a media result report; wrap-up meeting to determine needed improvements for '97 program.

UNEXPECTED BENEFIT The public relations fee budget was \$166,000. Padilla Speer Beardsley came in \$4,000 under budget -- & received "Best of Show" honors from PRSA/Minn.

ANOTHER CEO SPEAKS OUT STRONGLY FOR EMPLOYEES & COMMUNITY

Aaron Feuerstein isn't alone in his view that real social involvement is good business (last week's lead story). Mort Meyerson, chrm & CEO of Perot Systems, believes a company must have meaning to be successful:

- "I believe a business enterprise can produce money or meaning, and I believe a business enterprise can produce money & meaning. Too many businesses are stuck on the money side of the equation, with the mantra of maximizing shareholder value. Every time I read that, I throw up, because it's wrong. When someone says that to attract attention on Wall Street, they are demeaning themselves and people in the company."
- Perot Systems employees (called associates) carry company "values" cards. These values were determined after a year's work with 200 associates & 100 leaders. They are:
 1. Serve your customer
 2. Treasure your people
 3. Operate with integrity
 4. Reward the owners
 5. Contribute to your community

The last one was the most controversial, almost didn't make it. But now is proving to be good business. "Community relations is food for the

soul of the organization. It is not a nice thing to do. It is *fundamental* for the health of the enterprise."

- "Companies should let the employees own the value & the good will in the company. All you have to do is say: 'I trust you, I expect you to do the right thing.' They'll do it."
- "We should take the admonition of Teddy Roosevelt many years ago. It almost sounds arrogant, but I always have liked it: 'I care not what others think about what I do, I care very much about what I think I do.' And if Teddy Roosevelt were alive today, he would add, 'I care very much what my family thinks I do.' That cuts to the core of what CEOs need to think about. **The audience is not Wall Street analysts, and the audience is not the press. The audience is your own people in your own company.**"
- If businesses fail to do this, "then we will fail miserably in our society."

His views are profiled in 4/97 *Corporate Community Relations Letter* (Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass 02167)

"RETURN ON EXPECTATIONS" FOCUSES ON NON-FIN'L INDICATORS

How to Manage Your R.O.E. (Return On Expectations) adds practical applications to the theme that reputation, tho unrecorded on the balance sheet, is a pivotal asset requiring management as much as financial capital does (pr 3/10). Booklet, published jointly by the Institute for Asian Private Equity Management and The Omega Group, charts the situation thus:



BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT IS MAJOR PAYOFF

All items in the chart "are products of a myriad of elements. If they are all positive, you gain the 'benefit of the doubt' ... an insurance policy that pays dividends when the financial symptoms of your enterprise are causing investor or analyst concern. The payoff is **time**; time to remedy whatever has slipped.

"**Credibility**, the degree to which an investor trusts you, is a very fragile opinion. It takes constant attention & care to maintain. It is easily lost and is, generally, most difficult to regain. It is also personalized. There are no formulas, only explanation & interpretation, useless unless one also has the capacity for introspection."

Without the benefit of the doubt, you are immediately tried & convicted in the minds of analysts, investors, journalists -- as well as other key stakeholders in non-investor realms.