

- **Most rarely pursue the news** & are only occasionally exposed to local or national news programs. "MTV News" is the predominant source of current events for teens, as well as "infotainment" programs such as "Extra" or "Entertainment Tonight."
- **Participants would watch anything else before they chose to watch an educational program.** Consistently thruout all segments, a strong sentiment emerged on this point.
- **Drug & alcohol education programs are having little effect.** Most could cite programs where police officers showed pictures of car accidents caused by people on drugs or alcohol. All agreed these were effective only as long as the fear lasted, a few weeks at best. One participant said the message is only lasting when it hits close to home. When he saw how "one mistake ruined a whole life" of someone he knew, he did not forget the message.
- **Teen smoking is increasing**
- **The Internet is failing to replace tv as an entertainment source**
- **Use of public transportation is declining** due to danger & inconvenience

(More from them at 404/266-2600)

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PROFESSIONALS

¶ **The 2 central figures in the Clinton sex controversy both work in pr.** After leaving the White House, Monica Lewinsky & Linda Tripp were given jobs with ASDPA Ken Bacon (Asst Sec Defense for PA) at the Pentagon. It was as coworkers in that office that the conversations began, say press reports, which ended up being recorded by Tripp. The woman that could be the real catalyst for the whole mess -- ex-Nixon Watergate-era operative Lucianne Goldberg -- is connected to pr indirectly. She's a book agent.

¶ **1998 N.American Senior Media Directory** lists media in Mexico & Costa Rica as well as Canada & US. Gives frequency, circulation, editorial profiles, key personnel, formats, deadlines. In addition to national, regional & local pub'ns & special newspaper sections aimed at seniors, directory includes tv & radio broadcasts, columnists & syndicates distributing senior-specific info. Appendixes give 40 senior mailing lists. (Available on disk with listing capabilities, \$379 ppd, or hard copy, \$99 + \$4 postage) from GEM, 570 W. Riverview Circle, Reno, NV 89509; 702/322-5164)

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

DIES. Patricia Penney Bennett (72) of a brain aneurysm Jan.16. She was elected to PRSA's College of Fellows in '92 & to the founding roster of 25 Honorees in the

nation's first Honor Roll for Women In PR; 1st women pres of LA/PRSA & to be elected its Distinguished Professional of the Year in '69.

BARRIER TO CHANGE NOW IS ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, SAY EXECS

What a switch. The greatest barrier to making desired change in their organizations is now "organizational culture," say 2,143 execs across 23 nations. In the late 80s, early 90s, the greatest barrier was "worker resistance." So finds Watson Wyatt's study, *Competing in a Global Economy*. What an opportunity for pr.

- *"Executives recognize that the old culture of their org'ns still exists long after structural change has happened & that old culture -- & the values it represents -- has not been replaced by a new culture with clearly defined values.*
- *"Executives say that issues such as culture, values & human behavior -- which have often been described as 'soft' issues in business -- are as important to success as the 'hard' issues such as finance, structure & work processes.*
- *"Indeed, these soft issues are in many ways the hardest issues -- &, across the world, senior executives are struggling to deal with them."*

CHANGE INITIATIVES UNDERTAKEN -- & MIXED RESULTS REPORTED:

1. **Actions taken** by respondents' organizations in the past 2 yrs include:

- Reorganization (flattening, realigning reporting relationships or business units) (67%)
- Merger or acquisition (54%)
- Reduction in staff/downsizing (43%)
- Outsourcing business/administrative activities (36%)
- Divestiture (32%)
- None of the above (12%)

2. **Positive impact of change** on the org'n:

- improved productivity (78%)
- improved quality/customer service (66%)
- increased customer satisfaction (60%)
- increased ability to retain top performers (51%)
- increased company skills & knowledge (51%)

3. **Negative impact of change** (all culture killers):

- increased employee workloads (59%)
- decreased employee morale (53%)
- decreased employee loyalty/commitment (50%)



PR ALSO KEY PLAYER IN INITIATIVES THAT IMPROVE FINANCIAL RESULTS

93% of responding sr mgrs rate "focusing on customer service" as the most important factor in improving financial results. "Developing mgmt talent" is 2nd (84%). Other areas that practitioners can influence:

1. 76% blame "poor leadership" as the number one cause of failure in their industries
2. 70% cite "ability to lead/manage people" as the most important skill needed by managers (unchanged from the previous study in '94)
3. Leadership is at the heart of employee productivity: 96% rate "communication between mgmt & workers" as the most important factor for increasing employee productivity"
 - "Creating an environment of shared values & goals" is 2nd at 93%
 - 3rd is "increased worker skills & knowledge" (86%)
4. Barriers to leadership development: inadequate leadership training programs (58%); lack of commitment by sr mgmt (52%); inadequate succession planning (51%); failure to delegate responsibility & authority to subordinates (49%)

STUDY REAFFIRMS THE ABSOLUTE ESSENTIALITY OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

- A. "An interesting finding from this study is the strong link between communications, shared values & goals, & increased skills. This link points to the need to develop learning cultures where innovation, motivation & involvement are key values of the organization. Clearly, senior executives recognize that employee development programs alone cannot create this learning culture, but they are the price of admission to the global playing field."
- B. Most important programs for implementing business strategy, according to CEOs (29% of US respondents): communication between employees & mgmt (96%); training & development of employees (87%); performance-based pay programs (73%)

(455 US execs, of which 29% are CEOs, participated. More from Watson Wyatt, Bethesda, MD 1-800-388-9868; Reigate, England 44-0173-724-1144; www.watsonwyatt.com)

SUGGESTIONS FOR OVERCOMING APPROVAL PARALYSIS

After hearing a colleague complain, "Trying to get info & approvals from this company is like trying to pull rabbits out of a hat," Carol Beekman (a consultant in Laguna Niguel, Calif) sent pr these examples of "pr magic." "By practicing what I call 'pr magic,' you can make some headway & move on with your strategic plans ... & get rave reviews from your superiors."

- **Magic trick #1: Making a coin appear -- No budget.** You have been asked to publish a brochure about a new product, but you have to fit it into

your current pub'ns budget. Don't whine about the lack of money for this job. Proceed with the project & outline the format, contents, design & quantity that you CAN do with the current budget. Ask a design firm to give you some cost estimates & samples for 2 other types of brochures that cost more dollars. Present these alternatives to management, & see if they will find more budget for this project.

- **Magic trick #2: Now you see it, now you don't -- Getting approvals.** In many corporations, getting approvals is more of a nightmare than writing the copy. Approval copies seem to have a habit of disappearing from execs' desks, who claim they never saw it. From the attorney to the spokesperson quoted, you could spend weeks getting approval on a simple 2-pg news release. I've tried hand-delivering, with impassioned pleas to return it on time, bribes of cookies if returned by tomorrow & standing in the room while the exec reads it. But my favorite trick is to prepare a memo like the following:

"This copy is going out on the newswire at 6am Friday. If you have any additions or corrections, please forward them to me by Thursday at 5pm. Thanks for your prompt attention to this matter."

Make sure the exec's assistant sees this disclaimer & then, if you don't hear anything, send the copy. (Remember, magicians have to take risks!)

TEENAGE RESEARCH PRESENTS A WORRISOME PICTURE OF FUTURE

Duffey Communications launched a research & info gathering program called Trend Factory. It will isolate & track data among 5 target groups: 1) teens; 2) singles; 3) working families with school-aged children; 4) DINK couples (dual income, no kids); 5) working & retired seniors. This focus will enlarge as subgroups emerge from these primary target audiences.

First Trend Factory focused on teens -- middle school, high school & 1st-yr college students thruout the Southeast. They were asked in focus groups to identify current trends, describe the extent of their news exposure, rate the effects of the media & share their feelings on a range of topics.

IF ACCURATE, HERE ARE THE FINDINGS TEEN TARGETERS HAVE TO WORK WITH

- **Clothing is the 1st trend** on the teenage mind
- **Bulk of their info comes from tv shows** such as "Friends" & "Moesha." The retro-70s & hip-hop styles of these 2 shows, as well as the "freaky" look popularized by the NBA's Dennis Rodman, were identified as fashionable.
- **Violence, nudity & strong language of the current media have no effect on them**, say respondents -- even tho tv is cited as the source that feeds fashion trends. Most view the "R" rating on tv & movies more as a quality seal than a warning label & consider violence "good entertainment." These statements stem from the feeling that seeing an excess of violence growing up numbed the impact.