

5. The results can be used in benchmarking projects between dep'ts or companies

But, she notes, hers is designed for Canadian accounting standards, culture & communication practices. Her new newsletter, *keywords*, will explore these connections. (More from her at Box 44109 Southcentre P.O., Calgary, AB Canada T2J 7C5; 403/271-6729)

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PROFESSIONALS

¶ **US Cabinet Secretary begins each day with pr session.** Togo West, Sec of Veterans Affairs -- with 200,000 employees -- told the VA pa training conf he meets daily at 8 a.m. with his 2 top pa officers & the dept's lobbyist. Asst Sec & chief of staff also attend. The former Sec of the Army also told pa staffers their job includes guiding & training execs including himself. He asked pa to provide "intelligence" in the military sense -- i.e. anticipating issues by knowing what's going on out there, which he said means building local relationship networks.

¶ **Master of Exec Com'n Degree program is launched on the Web** by Seton Hall U (South Orange, NJ). Online program is targeted at experienced mgrs from every discipline & profession who don't have time for on-campus learning. 20-month, 36-credit, accelerated grad program is enrolling candidates now; orientation & individual skills coaching assessment from Oct 2-4. Each student will have a writing coach & a speech/presentation coach; be assigned to one of two learning teams of 12-18 students who stay together to build continuity & collegiality. An exec mentor will work with each team. Program consists of 5 sequential modules that focus on leading the modern org'n, analysis & transformation of corp culture, message delivery, diversity & globalization, shaping organizational goals. Entrance requirements include an essay detailing the candidate's goals; BA degree; transcripts; letters of nomination; work sample. \$23,000 tuition includes books, articles, audio & videotapes, CD-ROMS, on-site housing for 3 on-campus weekend meetings over the 20-month period, meals & diploma.

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

DIED. Jud Perkins, longtime PRSA leader & champion of causes in his home state of Michigan. Retired from GTE in '82, ran JPPR counseling firm in Muskegon since.

NOTICE TO prr READERS

2-weeks ago, a pink, 4-pg **Survey of the Profession** arrived with your issue of pr reporter. If you filled yours out & returned it...thank you! If you placed it on your to-do pile, please fill it out & return it now, while it's top of mind. Misplaced surveys will cheerfully be replaced. Just call (603/778-0514); we'll fax or mail you another copy right away. The sooner they're returned, the sooner we can report the findings.

FREE MARKET & DEMOCRACY NOT ENOUGH IN FEARFUL, CHANGING WORLD; WHAT IS PR'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR A CIVIL SOCIETY?

"The government & the market are not enough to make a civilization. There must also be a healthy, robust civic sector -- in which the bonds of community can flourish. Government & the market are two legs on a three-legged stool. Without the third leg of **civil society**, the stool is not stable," writes Bill Bradley in *Community Works: The Revival of Civil Society in America*. Society can fall apart, as Haines Johnson warned (prr 1/23/95).

THREATS TO DEMOCRACY & THE PR ENVIRONMENT

1. **Civil society is declining** -- community ass'ns, neighborhoods, families, places of worship etc -- where people working together answer a) what is our purpose, b) what is the right way to act & c) what is the common good.
2. **Too many people have become passive & disengaged.** Tho opportunities to participate abound, people feel powerless. We are in danger of becoming a nation of spectators, says the Commission on Civic Renewal.
3. **Community groups have withered** since the mid-70s, where "specialized experts" work hand-in-hand with less-well-educated citizens. Record numbers of professionals have pulled out of these community-based ass'ns & joined their professional ass'ns, notes Theda Skocpol in *Community Works*.

NEW ROLE OF THE WORKPLACE

"Less likely to find civil society in neighborhoods, families & churches, Americans are more likely to find it at the workplace, in cyberspace, & in forms of political participation less organized & more sporadic than traditional political parties. Can these emerging forms of civil society act as a buffer between the market & the state, protecting Americans from the consequences of selfishness on the one hand & coercive altruism on the other?"

"Will they encourage people to practice political participation, learning through *the local & the immediate* what it means to be a citizen of the nation & even the world? Are they sufficient to encourage in people a sense of responsibility for both themselves & those with whom they share their society?" writes Alan Wolfe. Is promoting civics at work good pr?

STEPS TOWARD CIVIC RENEWAL: PUBLIC RELATIONS' ROLE

Building community is a pr opportunity -- whether thru coalition-building, community relations, employee volunteerism or social responsibility programs (see prr 3/2, 4/21/97). And its bottom-line benefit to the org'n has already been documented (prr 5/19/97, 5/10/93). Local involvement is key (see prr 2/9).



- "We may work in professions, but we live in places. Nat'l prof'l org'ns are important, & they should reflect on ways in which they can more fully promote the public interest, not just professional self-interest."
- "We challenge every citizen to become an active member of at least one ass'n dealing with matters of neighborhood, church, school or community concern," advises *A Nation of Spectators: How Civic Disengagement Weakens America & What We Can Do About It*. Employers can make time available & honor volunteers.
- **Strategic volunteerism.** Theda Skocpol urges "privileged Americans to rejoin -- or recreate -- the group settings in which they work with a broad cross-section of fellow citizens to address the nation's concerns. Americans need to place a new emphasis on working together, not just on 'helping the poor.' 'Doing with' rather than 'doing for' should be our watchword, if we want to revitalize the best traditions of voluntarism."

COUNCIL ON CIVIL SOCIETY OFFERS A NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **Recognize the moral dimensions of decisions** -- acting as if your own children were the ones most directly affected by these decisions
2. **Expand opportunities for flexible workplace arrangements**
3. **Expand opportunities for employee ownership, participation, training, workplace organizing & ass'ns, & other policies aimed at enhancing employee loyalty & building human & social capital**
4. **Look at unions differently.** Collective bargaining can serve as a non-governmental means of reducing inequality, especially for minorities, while offering individuals a means to engage in grassroots self-determination
5. **Reconsider financial support for faith-based org'ns** whose mission is to serve the poor & renew civil society. "There is nothing inherently illegitimate about religiously informed work for social betterment. Denial of support to faith-based org'ns is largely arbitrary & almost certainly counterproductive."

"A generation ago we realized that the degradation of our physical environment was the result of countless decisions, by individual citizens as well as large corporations, & that if we really wanted to clean it up we had to change our habits as well as our laws. The degradation of our civic environment stems from similar causes & requires similar remedies." -- Commission on Civic Renewal.

INFO & MATERIALS SOURCES

1) **National Commission on Civic Renewal**, funded by Pew Charitable Trusts, receives no public monies, has no official standing, is politically diverse. Co-chairs are William Bennett & Sam Nunn. Info & copy of *A Nation of Spectators* from <http://www.puaf.umd.edu/civicrenewal>

2) **Council on Civil Society** is a joint project of Institute for American Values & U Chi Divinity School. 24 scholars & leaders (among them Dan

Yankelovich) of differing beliefs & political affiliations have come together as volunteers to examine this subject. Info & copy of *A Call to Civil Society* from Institute for American Values, 1841 Broadway, NYC 10023; 212/246-3942.

3) **Brookings Institution's Community Works** (a collection of 18 perspectives on the civil society debate) from 202/797-6000.

PR ENHANCED BY FURTHER WORK ON NON-FINANCIAL INDICATORS

Noting discrepancies in studies of non-financial indicators -- while sensing the impact they can have on pr practice -- a reader has designed another system. This movement, when successful, has the potential to raise the standing of pr within all types of org'ns.

Comparing CDB's Hidden Value Index (pr 7/13) with Ernst & Young's "Measures that Matter" (pr 6/12/95), Elaine Dixon (Key Concepts, Calgary) points out that there is significant difference in what the analysts said they valued in each of the 2 studies, & that analysts & investors differ in how they value the same non-financial measures.

- "CDB claims on its Website that its Hidden Value Index gives investors a new way of looking at companies (even tho it surveyed analysts), implying that it believes investors' & analysts' value sets are the same. But given the E&Y study, we have to conclude the results of all of these studies need to be used very carefully.
- "This research is indeed very important, but in these early days of evaluating non-material assets where even terminology is still not universally accepted or understood, the approaches taken by these companies need to be replicated & validated.
- "It is thru that process, well-established in the academic world, that we might indeed be able to produce a list of 8 (5? 10?) factors that can be generalized to broader populations of analysts or investors.
- "In the meantime, it is extremely important that none of these indexes or measurement processes be sold as if they provide definitive measures of too very much."

DIXSON HAS DESIGNED AN EVALUATION PROCESS

Called KeyMatrix, modeled after the Swedish PR Assn's "Return on Communications" project. The process will:

1. Produce a picture of "where & how communication activities have had an impact, & with what contribution to organizational goals"
2. Inform the process of setting com'n goals & priorities, & allocating resources
3. Help others understand that key relationships don't just "happen"
4. Provide info about the non-financial assets of the org'n that key audiences such as investors increasingly demand