

3. In ways that don't deny people's experiences or knowledge
4. In ways that make people seem real. Painting a one-dimensional portrait of people won't work
5. They connect with the other side's themes & goals. A great example is the phrase "Peace through Strength" -- the message of those in the 80s who opposed the peace movement & its call for reducing military spending & nuclear arms
6. In ways that mobilize your community. Mobilizing frames have 3 characteristics: a) they define the problem & solution collectively; b) they identify a clear conflict with someone or some institution; c) they define the issue morally
7. It connects rather than separates various communities; uniting people who share common concerns
8. You don't undermine long-term goals. And thinking long-term may actually help a short-term campaign

(Copy from CCC Pub'ns, 1000 Wisconsin NW, DC 20007; 202/342-0567; \$7; \$3 for orders of 100+; 48 pgs)

## WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

**ELECTED.** NSPRA '99 ofcrs: pres, Jennifer Wayman Grossman (dir comms, Pikes Peak BOCES, Colorado Springs); pres-elect, Connie Blaney (dpr, Norman Public Schools, Okla); Mideast vp, Scott Ebright (deputy dir com'ns, Ohio School Boards Ass'n, Westerville); Northeast vp, Patricia Jennette (pr consultant, JCG & Schoolhouse Com'ns, Imperial, Penn)

PRSA's nominees for '99 ofcrs: pres, Samuel Waltz Jr (Sam Waltz & Assocs Counsel, Wilmington); pres-elect, Stephen Pisinski (pres, The Montgomery Group, San Francisco); treas, Lee Duffey (Duffey Communications, Atlanta); sec'y, Joann Killeen (vp-corp com'ns, Infinite pictures, Portland, OR)

**AWARDS.** NSPRA's Presidents Award to John Wherry (pres/exec dir, The

Parent Institute & the Teacher Institute, Fairfax) & former NSPRA exec dir

**WINNING PAPERS.** Institute for PR announces 3 top winners for papers presented at the First Interdisciplinary Conference on PR at U of MD, College Park (pr 5/18): 1) Kathleen Kelly (prof, dep't of com'n, U of Southwestern Louisiana) receives \$1,000 for her paper on "Stewardship: The Missing Step in the PR Process"; 2) Robert Wakefield (pres, Wakefield Comms) & 3) Gary Woller (assoc prof, Romney Institute of Public Mgmt, Brigham Young U) share a \$1,000 prize for their joint study "Business Responsibility & Society: A Global Public Relations Perspective on Adam Smith & Free Markets." (Copies available from Mel Sharpe 765/285-8215; msharpe@gw.bsu.edu)

## HUGE PR FIRMS: INCIPIENT DINOSAURS OR WAVE OF FUTURE ? ANSWER WILL INFLUENCE EVERY PRACTITIONER, NOT JUST FIRMS

When Interpublic bought Shandwick/Golin-Harris last month, could it have been the apogee of merging & bigness? The answer is really about how pr is practiced &, therefore, how the field is perceived -- so it reaches far beyond pr firms. It will affect every practitioner in every organization.

1. Traditional, tactical pr is today a commodity, notes the biggest of all, Burson-Marsteller, in the words of Harold Burson. Commodities are standardized, basically undifferentiated items purchased basically on price.
2. The megafirms helped make pr a commodity -- since the bulk of their work is media & promotion. Meanwhile the real value-added element of the field, strategy & facilitating change, has been invaded by mgmt consulting firms, lawyers, investment bankers & many others.

## MEDIUM-SIZED & EVEN SMALL FIRMS MAY BE THE BELLWETHERS

Depends on whether the prize is working for the Global Biggies or for the zillions of other companies & institutions needing counsel.

- Remember, Global Biggies have for some time not been engines of growth -- small business has, many of them new outfits, especially in quick-change areas like technology. Biggies get the play because their veneration on Wall Street & sheer size generate visibility. If old-style pr is now a commodity, for whom can firms work most profitably & professionally?
- Several Biggies have detected a cookie-cutter element in megafirms & hired medium-size firms -- or established a network of top local firms. This erodes the pitch of "global coverage" offered by megafirms.
- Megafirms themselves have been organizing around practice groups, many of which cover fields where they must go beyond traditional stuff -- healthcare, for instance.
- A rubric of megafirms -- all but 2 ad-agency owned -- is that clients can get 1-stop service: pr, adv'g, mktg, direct/database mktg, lobbying et al. But reports that it's harder to get units within megafirms to talk to one another than get independents to work smoothly together have been frequent. (This should be no surprise to anyone who's tried to build teamwork in any large organization.)

Either way, counseling firms are setting the tone for the field now.



**ROLE OF THE NEW TRADE ASS'N**

When he became the exec of Amer. Ass'n of PR Firms (AAPRF), Jack

Bergen pointed out the goal is to reaffirm that they are a sounder source of strategy & change mgmt than the new competitors, who only recently discovered pr's realm of relationships & com'n.

"The professional services pie can be much bigger for pr firms than it is today if we can let clients know what we can do," he told pr. Indeed, **the pie for all practitioners can expand if AAPRF can get this job done.**

- However, Bergen was reported in some publications as saying AAPRF was going to return the field to emphasizing media relations.
- Asked about this, he told pr what he meant was that pr can offer the advantage of both strategy and implementation -- tho the inference is clear implementation = media.
- If that's the direction the megafirm-led AAPRF takes -- i.e. back to commodity pr -- then small & medium firms who are rapidly moving to more sophisticated methods will remain the cutting-edge and megafirms may be dinosaurs.

Just because the mgmt fad of the moment is hugeness cannot overcome the realities of *dis-economies* of scale. **Economies** of scale are largely mechanical & impersonal. **Dis-economies** lie in the human realm of relationships & teamwork. At a time when nonfinancial measures are being discovered as the true values in organizations, and the drivers of success, failing to understand these *dis-economies* could be fatal.

**STAY TUNED**

All practitioners have a large stake in AAPRF's success -- *provided* it promotes pr's strategic, counseling & training services. If its message is back to concentrating on an ever more irrelevant media, practitioners can only look for its failure. The future lies not in such "communications."

As Ed Block says, the day pr decided to call itself "communications" was the start down the slippery slope away from senior management toward lower level tactical implementation. **In an era where relationships are the bottom line, PR's influence is needed at the policy level.**

**HI-TECH COMES TO FUNDRAISING; CAN SEEK GRANTS ON-LINE**

Bell Atlantic Foundation's Web site ([www.bellatlanticfoundation.com](http://www.bellatlanticfoundation.com)) is user friendly. Offers interactive e-mail for anyone wishing to communicate; enables grant seekers to apply on-line. Even promises to reply in 48 hours -- compared with applications mailed or faxed, which are responded to within 12 weeks.

- **By the year 2000, Bell Atlantic Fdn will only accept on-line applications** "consistent with its objective of technological progress & innovation." Web site received a Gold Award for excellence in com'n's in the '98 Wilmer Shields Rich Awards program sponsored by Council on Fdns & the Com'n's Network in Philanthropy.

- "In the ever evolving, fast-paced world of telecommunications, the Internet allows us to communicate the most current data available to the widest audience possible, while increasing our ability to **establish 1-on-1 dialogue** with the nonprofit community," says Ivan Seidenberg, chrm.
- "We are definitely pushing the cyber-edge with our Web site -- **using technology to enhance relations** with the nonprofit community thru two-way com'n, while prompting educational institutions & other nonprofit org'ns to see the benefits of using the Internet," notes Suzanne DuBose, pres.

**THE MATURING OF PR: FPRA CELEBRATES ITS 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

In 1938 Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce pr dir John Dillin left a meeting of chambers across Florida disappointed. They had promised to discuss the need for pr -- and didn't. So he did what enterprising practitioners do: rounded up some like-minded folks and started an org'n to deal with nothing but pr -- to help them "do their jobs better."

Today FPRA has chapters across the state, a healthy Education Foundation, a 41-year old awards program that puts on a show rivaled by none, and among other accomplishments is a charter member of the new universal accreditation program. A long list of new APRs were given their certificates at the 60<sup>th</sup> annual meeting last week.

FPRA also offers a higher tier accreditation, CPRC: Certified Public Relations Counselor.

Dillin was scheduled to call the conference to order once again, but is recuperating from an illness & was unable to attend. Except for his war service, it's one of the few -- if any -- conferences he's missed.

**"FRAMING" GUIDE SPOTLIGHTS HOW TO GET GOOD STORIES TOLD**

*A Guide to Developing Effective Messages and Good Stories About Your Work*, from Center for Community Change, explains how to "frame" a group's work & issues, as well as how to test frames or messages the group is using.

**Because it's written for community organizations, guide has a down home, grassroots tone that can help the largest, most sophisticated org'ns.**

Book includes advice on 1) how to tell the story of a group's work, 2) 6 principles of good storytelling, 3) how a small group can do its own focus group, 4) how to build a better argument for housing, as one example, 5) how to frame lobbying & organizing work, 6) case study of how to frame an issue. It suggests framing an org'n's work so...:

1. **It connects with society's underlying values & themes.** These core values include freedom, security, family, health, fairness, opportunity, caring
2. **It takes into account existing assumptions & experiences.** Often you will need to frame your story in a way that counters assumptions that might undermine your arguments