

for someone." These principles guided the group when it established a chapter in Texas' Rio Grande Valley, bringing new people to the lawsuit reform debate -- not the "same corporate crowd." CALA has 7,600 members/supporters in Houston who help keep legal issues on the front burner, in the media & in legislative discussions. (More from Opelt, 713/267-2302)

COST OF SECONDARY RESEARCH LOWER THAN PRIMARY RESEARCH

pr last week reported costs for working with Nat'l Opinion Research Center at U. Chicago. Pricing for **The Roper Center** at U. Conn differs slightly.

Clients of the Center can become members at different levels & receive services at member rates. **Non-member** fees are higher. **Purchasers** can buy data files to conduct their own secondary research or pay an hourly rate to have a Roper researcher pull together the info. Foreign data, analysis of a dataset or special request is at hourly rates, plus photocopying charges.

There are also different levels of membership to Roper's database, called **POLL**, allowing for ad hoc vs. unlimited use. **Publications** are available per issue or by subscription. (Contact the Roper Center, 860/486-4440)

ITEMS OF INTEREST TO PROFESSIONALS

¶ **Council of PR Firms will analyze why 10 companies on Fortune's '98 list of America's Most Admired Companies were selected** -- & the role pr played in their status. Council will compare the insights of other audiences to both the results of this year's poll & the criteria used to rank the companies. Fortune methodology is widely criticized -- as is that of most such rankings, e.g., USNews college ratings. Results will be released March 15. (More from Jack Bergen, 877/PRFIRMS)

¶ **More study needed?** PRSA announced that 121 candidates earned the APR designation after fall '98 exams, a passing rate of 52%. Total number of candidates taking exam was 210 PRSA members and 20 non-members.

WHO'S WHO IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

NAMED. Bruce Harrison, exec dir of the Arthur Page Society, is special advisor to Wash DC law firm O'Connor & Hannan. Harrison will handle environmental, energy, telecom's & health issues.

HONORS. Wayne Hill, svp, Edward Howard & Co. (Cleveland), named Tom Poling Practitioner of the Year by the Central Ohio Chapter/PRSA. Award recognizes accomplishments

that are a major contribution to the profession.

RETIRING. Terry Thompson, vp-pa, Pillsbury (Minneapolis), retires at end of year. He'll take a year off to complete his thesis towards an MFA in creative writing from Hamline U (St. Paul). Says after 2000 he'll "do anything that appeals to me."

LEARNING MAPS LEAD EMPLOYEES THRU DISCOVERY-BASED LEARNING

If you had to explain your organization's profit & loss to entry-level employees clearly & simply, so they could remember it (and understand it), how would you do it? Particularly with young, visually-oriented workers.

Companies like Sears & Dow AgroSciences (Indianapolis) use learning maps. Like road maps, they explain key messages & strategies -- *visually* showing employees about business processes or financial goals. They:

- **Are easy to use** & require no prior training or special skills
- **Help generate discussion** among employees at all levels
- **Increase the understanding** of how the organization works

"The alternative is death by bullet point," Dow AgroScience's Harry Safstrom told prr. "You walk out of the room & no one has a clue what was said, even if they managed to survive the presentation. Now we have people understanding effectively how cash flow is valued and how we're doing. They can articulate it."

HOW THE MAPS ARE CREATED

RootMaps™ are the product of Root Learning Inc. (Perrysburg, O). Map could be a large picture of a town, store, even a river that leads participants thru a business or historical process.

1. Maps are usually generated by senior managers, who define key issues that should be communicated to employees
2. Reps from Root Learning work with management to refine these issues & determine content
3. Before final maps are produced, prototypes are taken to various locations to test on employees & get feedback

HOW MAPS ARE USED

Final maps may be shown to 7-9 associates at a time, representing as many cross-functional areas. The maps are introduced by a facilitator or coach who engages employees in conversation by asking questions such as, "What are the implications for our business & our team?" The facilitator makes sure everyone contributes.

1. "We try to engineer an 'a ha!' from people," says Randy Root, Root Learning CEO. "That's a more demanding form of communication. It's more about listening than telling."



2. At Sears, every employee goes thru learning maps with 8-10 colleagues. Afterwards, the group joins other groups for a "town hall meeting" to expand what they've learned & put it into action. Sample questions:

- What is one thing we could start doing in this store (service center, warehouse, office) tomorrow to improve our competitive position?
- What could we stop doing?
- What could we simplify?

Few ideas are rejected, some are acted on quickly -- because they're good & employees see mgmt is taking action on their suggestions. Every map is rolled out in the same manner at a town hall meeting -- from the top of the company on down.

HOW DOW USES THE MAPS

Dow AgroSciences uses learning maps to "clearly & consistently communicate the strategic direction of the company."

Because Dow is global, questions accompanying the maps are translated into a variety of languages. Facilitators come from each office where the maps are presented. Maps were tested all over the world, ensuring that details like ethnic diversity were added. Four maps were created, targeting all employees:

- **Global marketplace map** -- what's changing for sales & customers, what are threats & opportunities?
- **Value creation map** -- economic profits & how employees affected them
- **Project management map** -- decoding new lingo for employees since Dow reorganized into a global company
- **Strategy map** -- details corporate strategy

After completing a map session, each employee receives a mini-map with information on back. "The maps are posted around the org'n," says Safstrom. "People will reference the maps as a way to stay on track."

HR uses the global marketplace map (a) to explain the business to customers & com'ns people, (b) as an orientation tool for all new employees, (c) as a walk-by for recruiting. It's even posted on their Internet site. "It's a powerful tool & it really works."

(More from Root Learning, 419/874-0077; Safstrom, 317/337-4020)

According to a *Harvard Business Review* article by 3 Sears execs, "We want managers to change their behavior towards employees, to communicate the company's goals & vision effectively ... because we cannot do well financially unless we do well in the eyes of a customer. We want frontline employees to change their behavior toward customers -- be more responsive, take more initiative & provide better service."

STUDY: ORIGINAL NEWS CONTENT INCREASINGLY AVAILABLE ON WEB

Log onto your newspaper's Web site & you'll find the same stories you read in the paper that morning. But that's changing, says the 5th annual Media in Cyberspace study. **The number of original articles written exclusively for newspaper & magazine Web sites is growing.**

"This shows that online versions of magazines & newspapers are legitimate news delivery mechanisms, not just distribution devices," says Don Middleberg, of Middleberg & Assoc (NY). "This confirms the birth of a third news medium: print, broadcast & online." Middleberg & Assoc conducted the study with Steve Ross of Columbia School of Journalism.

Key findings: (1) elevation of media Web sites to the same status as their print counterparts, (2) journalists' use of the Web & e-mail as ways to handle news sources & obtain info.

- **Newspaper and magazine Web sites have grown enormously in the last 3 yrs.** In '98, 58% of respondents said they had a Web site, vs. 25% in '95.
- **Original news content on the Web has grown sharply as well.** Only 22% of newspaper respondents with Web sites reported less than 5% original content, vs. 39% in '97. Only 11% of magazine respondents with Web sites said their sites had less than 5% original content, vs. 27% in '97.
- **Journalists still prefer face-to-face meetings with sources they don't know but, once they know the source, are comfortable communicating by e-mail or telephone.** E-mail was preferred by 38% of respondents vs. 32% by phone & 21% in person. Fax was preferred by only 9%.
- **Journalists are turning to the Web as a secondary resource for breaking news.** Reporters are more likely to contact a spokesperson or interested party first in a breaking news situation. Mag writers are likely to call industry experts next, then log onto an orgn's Web site. Newspaper journalists will use the Web second & call industry experts third.
- **More journalists can access the Internet.** Only 2% of respondents said they had no access or didn't answer, down significantly from 37% in '95.

Study is based on a survey sent last fall to managing & biz editors at 1,400 newspapers & 2,000 magazines. 192 newspaper & 170 magazine editors responded. (More from Middleberg, 212/888-6610)

CREATING STAKEHOLDERS AMONG SMALL-BUSINESS OPERATORS

Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse (pr 2/22) finds one of its more successful strategies in creating stakeholder buy-in is **bypassing large companies & instead soliciting support from consumers, taxpayers & small biz operators.** "People who could not cost shift the financial burden of lawsuit abuse," says Jon Opelt, director of CALA-Houston.

CALA is not a lobbying group, Opelt says, so wants to avoid the appearance of being beholden to special interests. "Support by big business might taint our message. We don't want to be perceived as carrying water