

~~Thanks, Judy . . .~~

This just goes out with the post conference packet to the conferees, not printed for any publication.

One of things we learn in my field, as you do in yours, is that right off you have to first deal with the expectations of your audience. ~~And~~ I know you're still eating your dessert so I want to talk a little bit about your immediate expectations. I imagine they revolve around time and I want you to know ~~that~~ I am very conscious ~~that~~ I'm not doing an hour long workshop. In fact, I'm thinking of some research that we now have about how long a person should talk to any group. It was done out at San Diego State, if any of you are here from the Union you may be aware of this. It seems a graduate student there in psychology discovered the average audience will spend about 10 minutes actively listening to a speaker. And then they'll spend about 10 minutes sort of half listening to a speaker. But after 20 minutes the whole audience is into sexual fantasizing. Now I have nothing against sexual fantasizing but I will try to hold to twenty minutes. I can tell, by the way, by looking out there, what's going on, so . . .

I hope no one here wonders why a public relations counselor should be addressing you. Those of you who attended my workshops at three previous of your conventions know my theory that you really don't just help build present and future circulation. You don't necessarily even bring in some money that may help bottom lines. But ~~that~~ indeed, you are the prime -- and in some cases the only true -- community outreach that your publications have. # Now in a business where the ink comes off on your fingers every damn time, and where the paper usually ends up in the bushes on a rainy day and where a certain number of people in town are upset at all moments about something that appeared in the paper, I'm not sure we should downplay that aspect of newspaper and education. In fact, I'm confident we should upplay it as far as we can.

Because your role as public relations representatives of your papers, is vital not just to what you do to getting students to use the product in a way that maybe wasn't intended when newspapers were invented. Maybe it was, but I don't think so. I think this is a new concept taking a product that has one public use and giving it a very specialized focus as an educational use in a more truly educational setting. But it seems to me that your abilities there need to be looked at when you talk about professionalism as you are at this conference. Now some of you told me in my workshops that you thought it was terribly unfair that someone like me should come along and say in addition to everything else, being as busy as you are, that you should now have to take on this public relations role. Well, you know, unfairness is really something you come to expect in this life. Shucks, in my town the Catholic Church plays bingo in Latin so us Protestants can't win. Maybe I can help you take a different view of your professionalism if we look for just a minute at this concept that our democratic society calls public relations. Some folks think that it means getting stories into the newspapers you represent. But you yourselves know, as well as outside publicists, that that's a pretty tough thing to do. You also know that really that is only a part of the process. When I talk about public relations, I'm talking about that essential ingredient in every society. The building of positive relationships that enables the society to function. And that's the role where I see you having a special impact. In fact, one definition of public relations really fits specifically what you do everyday. We say that public relations makes a product, a service, a personality, an idea part and a factor in persons' daily lives. Isn't that really what you're trying to do -- to make the newspaper a factor in the daily lives of citizens, catching them at a moment in their maturing process when they are most apt to pick up that kind of a good habit.

I'm sure it is. But I also see a flip side to that and that is professionalism is a two-edged opportunity. In fact, someone recently defined professionalism in a way that means a lot to me and it may have value for you. This person said that a professional is a person who can apply art as well as science to a subject that is inherently in the public interest. Think about that for a minute and then think of what you do. You have some art, goodness knows. Do you have a science? Are you evolving a science? Are you borrowing some of the sciences that fit what you do? And certainly would anyone argue that getting a population to begin reading what's happening about that. And then, hopefully, participating in that, is inherently in the public's interest. You know, I wanted to give a somewhat different title to what I was going to say to you today. Everybody's into all these quantifications. So I picked out sort of a . . . well, I guess you could call it an algebraic proposition. And this is what I want to talk to you about. I hope you can see this, by the way. You see I'm too much into my own science which tells me that you'll only remember 20% of what I tell you. And only 30% of what I showed you. But if I tell you something and then write it up here, you'll remember about 50% of it for an average of about 8 days according to the best information we have at this moment. So 8 days from now at noon I want you all back here and we'll

I want to talk about this proposition:

$$\text{NIE} = \text{USP} + \text{ESI} - \text{OCV}$$

Now let me translate that for you.

One of the great principles on which your institutions operate in all phases, in the principle of USP. It's a marketing term as many of you know. It stands for Unique

Selling Proposition. What is there about my operation, my product that is unique? That positions it in society in a way that people should give it some attention, should give some of their valuable time. And should probably part with some of their valuable dollars to take part in it. ESI stand for Enlightened Self Interest. So what is there in NIE that combines a unique product in society with some enlightened self interest? And finally, if we can show that we've got a Unique Selling Proposition, and that it involves Enlightened Self Interest, something that's sure the publishers and those of us affiliated with them, benefit from, but so does society. How are we going to achieve One Clear Voice to present this back inside our organizations and also to the public that we wish to use the NIE program? It looks pretty simple when you write it up like this. But I have a hunch it's not all that simple. And I want to take just a few minutes to talk about how I think we can achieve that. How I think we need to know what our Unique Selling Proposition is. What's different in NIE than maybe any other single approach to the use of "real world tools" in the classroom? How indeed can we show the Enlightened Self Interest of this at a time when more and more educational organizations and teachers while desperate for tools, are also increasingly suspicious of who's trying to get into my platform and take advantage of my classroom in order to make some private message. Once we know those two things, how can we have One Clear Voice on that message back inside the newspapers and the newspaper industry and at the same time out there to the teachers, parents, students and the school administrators that we need to reach. Have you all read the current issue of Harper's? It has a wonderful article in it called "Why Johnny Can't Think". If you haven't read it, get hold of it. Someone, at last, has taken all of those wonderful or horrible reports on the state of public education and done a summary. I think you'll find it, as I did,

enlightening. But the bottom line on the story is that far too much education has moved toward rote learning and "right answers." It seems to me right there is our Unique Selling Proposition. You sure can't have rote learning in a publication that nobody, including the editor-in-chief, knows until it hits the street. It's clearly not rote learning. It's different everyday. It's different for every reader. And right answers? Good grief! Are there any right answers in the newspaper? None that I've ever found because if you tell me on page 1 that something is happening, you're sure to tell me on page 4 that something else is happening which totally changes what's happening on page 1. Now think for a minute of the tools available, the ones we have to compete with to find a Unique Selling Proposition. Is there another single tool on continuing basis that gives us that kind of Unique Selling Proposition? If there is, I confess I'm unaware of it. I should tell you parenthetically that we counsel both the American Association of School Administrators and a number of school districts around the country, and are deeply involved for them in educational policy which, of course, is critical to their public relationships. I think our Unique Selling Proposition lies in the criticisms leveled as epitomized in that Harper's article. Get a copy. I urge you. It will be a great selling tool for you.

Of course, there's another side of this. And that is, people say, "Well, you may talk about Enlightened Self Interest, but don't you really want to get into my classroom so you can make a perpetual subscriber out of me or my children or my students?" Of course there's truth in that. That's the self interest part. But it seems to me there's an ironic enlightenment in doing that. Because people who say that tend to be aping the statement made by so many that somehow the newspapers or the media in general have this all encompassing power to

persuade people -- that whatever we say is what people think. Well, you've seen the studies. I've seen the studies. And though our colleagues in the editorial office may still believe a little bit that there's some truth in that, the public and you & I know better. We know our media may have the ability to put subjects on peoples' agendas, to tell people what to think about, but there's almost no evidence we have great power to tell them what to think. In fact, just last month, no less a person than Leo Bogart of the Newspaper Advertising Bureau -- one the real scholars in field of the effects and impacts of your medium -- issued another study in which he talks about the power of the press. And he says once again that the press has this wonderful role to stimulate the mind to get people to think about subjects. And then, he says, they go off all by themselves, using other mechanisms to make up their minds. We need to convey that irony, it seems to me, to people who use the NIE program so they don't in anyway see getting the newspaper into the classroom as some kind of manipulative mechanism. That indeed, the role of newspapers in society in general is to stir up the thinking. And I always thought that's what education was about -- the stirring up of thinking. And here we have a product far better than any textbook which can stir up the thinking. It may be of interest to you (it may not -- I've considered that too -- but I have the podium) to just review some of the science that we use in our work of trying to stir up the thinking and get people to make decisions in a democratic society. In fact, I know some of you were teachers, so you'll remember the four ways that we can educate people. Remember that wonderful list:

- 1) First of all, there's RO -- Reflective Observation. That's one way people learn.

- 2) And then there's AC -- Abstract Conceptualization.
Another way people learn. They take one or two cases in the abstract and then conceptualize a whole theory.
- 3) And then there's AE - Active Experimentation.
Actually trying it out.
- 4) And then there's CE -- Concrete Experience.

I was thinking as I prepared to talk to you today, how does this learning theory apply to NIE? And I came to a conclusion that I hope those of you who know more about pedagogy than I, will agree with me. And that is, in a funny way, NIE may be closer to touching all four of these bases than any other mechanism teachers have. A teacher may use a text, for example, and get some RO -- Reflective Observation, maybe some Abstract Conceptualization too. But, of course, the newspaper does that too. That's just a basic job of what we do. How does a teacher get some Active Experimentation around ideas? Well, texts, of course, have those nice little pages at the end of chapters to give you lesson plans or activities. But most of those are contrived. Almost all of those are either things that have already happened or that are just kind of postulated . . . "what if" kind of questions. What else has the teacher got in the classroom to get people to experiment with ideas that are current at this moment -- to get students to actually participate in so far as they can at whatever their grade level is . . . to the real decisions being made in their society today? I don't think there's a textbook written or could be written unless someone finds a way to update textbooks daily. We're told that may happen someday but it hasn't yet. So we felt an advantage right there -- experimentation in thinking about what's happening now.

How about Concrete Experience? Is there any way we, in the classroom with newspapers, can get people concrete experience? Well, it's not the same certainly as conducting a science experiment. But I wonder today what are the important experiments students conduct to learn about living their lives. Certainly science & math and all those other things they experiment with in school are important. But I wonder if maybe the most important thing today isn't experimenting in the process of socialization -- of learning to live with a lot of other people who come from different backgrounds, who have different views on subjects. Now if you stop to think about it, the classroom is really the mini example of the larger democratic society. It's the micro-example of socialization that occurs everyday in our entire society. Again, I don't know of any other tool available in the classroom that can get concrete experience of people who share different views than can the newspaper. The reason I think is inherent in the criticism of textbooks that was in the Harper's article. Texts today tend to present "right answers". It's hard then to experience my classmates who may come at the subject differently because we're all told, "Come, at it in the same way." But when I introduce the newspaper in the classroom . . . ah, now, well pick your subject, just pick your subject and think in your own mind for a minute. Putting that subject in the classroom, what differing views are the students going to bring, no matter how young, even if they are bringing the views that they've learned at home strictly by rote from their parents. Certainly the newspaper, well, almost every item in the paper is going to enable that kind of concrete experience, of socialization, of learning about the democratic process in a way I don't believe anything else can bring to the classroom.

There's just one other piece of science I want to share with you. This has to do with how do we persuade people.

Clearly you need to be persuasive with your teachers whose classrooms you want to enter. And you need to be persuasive back home. We know a lot about persuasion. In fact, we know there are six ways, and only six, that we can persuade people.

- 1) The first method is called the Logical Method. The only thing wrong with it is that in a world like ours, it nearly does not work. But that comes as no surprise to anyone who works for a newspaper or reads a newspaper. Let me just say that the Logical Method is important because clearly if we can't build a case based on facts, on occurrences, some rational thinking, then probably we shouldn't be persuading anybody at all.

Once we have such a case, and certainly NIE does have that case, there are five other methods to persuade people:

- 2) The Association Method and there's a wonderful example of it right on the wall over there. Our Australian friends at The Age want to associate their product with something that's done in the morning because that's when they want you to use their product. So what do they call it? They call it "Breakfast for the Brain". And they know that food is what's eaten at breakfast so they talk about "fresh daily". They've taken these other phrases that we use in the morning on a regular basis. And through association they've made us think of their newspaper in a similar way. It's a powerful way to persuade people.
- 3) The next method is known as the Motivational Method. The Motivational Method comes from Dr. Dichter and his studies in advertising and public relations

techniques during the '50's and '60's on discovering what people's motivations are and then going ahead and playing to those motivations -- showing how our particular system or product in fact helps them achieve the motivations they are pursuing.

- 4) The next method is called Social Reward & Punishments. That one is obvious. Probably the best example of it is in the newspapers. The implication is that if we do certain things, we will be socially rewarded, and if we do certain other things, we will be socially punished. So if you'll think for a minute about the Mercedes ads . . . where is the car always parked? Of course, it's parked in front of the mansion, or the country club, or the downtown bigshots' club. The implication is clear: If you drove a Mercedes, of course, you would belong here. Well, that may be stretching a little bit, but the power of social rewards and punishments is pretty immense.

There are two other methods we know will persuade people:

- 5) One is called the Whole Personality Method. The Whole Personality Method attempts to make ideas, or products or services tie in with the whole belief system of an individual or of a group of individuals.
- 6) The other method is called the Repetition Method. If an idea is repeated often enough in the same way and it isn't constantly contradicted, we do indeed begin to accept that idea through repetition.

Now if you look at these six methods: The Logical Method, The Association Method, The Motivational Method, The Social Rewards & Punishments, Whole Personality, and

Repetition. It seems to me there's almost a road map for you in selling NIE both back at the ranch and out there at the schools. I don't even have to talk to you about the logical case you can build. And I'm assuming you are able to associate the idea of NIE with those objective of both the newspapers and certainly of the schools. But how about motivations? Are you indeed plugging into the motivations of the teachers and the principals you need to reach in order to get their approval. Those motivations have certainly been undergoing some stress and some change and I wonder how much you know as individuals about the motivations of the schoolroom, of the classroom, of the school system today. It seems to me that's a key opportunity to learn a way to align what we do with their motivations.

Now how about social rewards? When we get the lead teacher, the lead principal, the opinion leader on the staff using NIE, are we effective in holding that person up to the others to show to the others that it is socially rewarding, that this person that is an opinion leader in education is going indeed to think better of other teachers who use NIE in their classrooms.

The Whole Personality is an interesting opportunity for selling NIE , for persuading people of its importance.

today in education. You are talking essentially about a group of educational leaders whose personalities, essentially their belief systems are under attack. The whole idea of whether Johnny can read, and whether Susie can add, of whether the public schools are where the action is, of whether they ought to be the melting pot, are generally part of the basic belief systems of those

teachers in place in our school systems. They are under attack. I think NIE is one of those few opportunities, one of those few activities which can show that indeed their beliefs about education as a democratic melting pot -- an opportunity to socialize our democratic society is real. Because certainly nothing can do it the way a newspaper in the classroom can. And I believe that if we can look at the whole personality of the educator today, that we may have a better opportunity than anyone to make an alignment there.

As for repetition, well, I know none of you are shy about that. You tell the story again, and again, and again, and indeed you must. Because you all have read the numbers . . . you know that indeed there is again going to be a shortage of teachers. It's going to start in about two years and someplaces it's going to start now. It's kind of interesting, our offices in Exeter are in an old Federal structure built around 1800, one of those typical four story square buildings. We use the first three floors but we rent out the top floor to a teacher placement agency. And we used to have almost no traffic through the building. Now, we're having to pull all of our dirty boxes out of the halls because he's complaining so many people are tramping up to that fourth floor to see him about the moving up in the system, about the job. And many of them are school superintendents seeing him about, "Can you find me some teachers, I'm short?"

Well, that means we have to repeat this message without end because clearly that part of repetition to persuade is not going to be easy in a changing teacher population.

Those are some of the scientific things that I would want to know if I were you working towards professionalism in NIE. And, of course, there's a lot more. Building public relationships essentially is the application of

behavioral sciences. And I think as you become more and more professional, you'll be learning more and more about them and applying techniques like these to what you do everyday. You know, it's interesting that in our society almost any message that you send out is automatically countered by somebody else. That's, I suppose what democracy is all about. And so I know that some of your own journalists probably will contradict my message. Certainly occasionally they do write some things about us in public relations that are not totally flattering. And I know that some of your managers may counter that and say, "Well get out there and sell the circulation or whatever." Well if they do, I just want you to be prepared for the rebuttal. Always remember the Lutheran minister who had heard that public relations was a wonderful way to bring people into his church. Trouble was, he didn't have any budget. So he decided the one technique available to him was that wonderful bulletin board in front of his church. He thought if he could get just the right message out there, this would undoubtedly persuade everybody. So he thought and thought about the message and finally one day when he went home for supper, he went out and wrote up what he was sure was the grabber phrase. He put up on his bulletin board, "If you're tired of sin, come in." He thought that would fill the pews next Sunday. So he went home for supper. It was prayer meeting night, so about an hour later he came back. And just to illustrate this principle, already written across the glass of the bulletin board in lipstick was written this message, "And if you're not, phone 543-7062."

My word to you is that if you will learn how building public relationships is essential to your program and to your newspaper. And if you will learn some of the behavioral science and communications techniques that make you truly professional, you won't have to worry

about calling that phone number. In fact, thinking in a little broader sense, maybe I should ask each of you to ask yourselves: What does your newspaper expect from you? Are they looking at you to bring in present and future circulation? Is that really their bottom line? Are they looking at you as a source of revenue, present-day, needed certainly, revenue? Is that their bottom line? Or are they willing to see you as a community relations activity? As something that frankly newspapers have been looking for for a very long time. Reporters may write things that are denigrating to public relations but I can tell you from personal experience that front offices of newspapers everywhere are looking for ways to build better relationships with the community for years. As so often happens, they have been seeking some exotic answers and bringing high-priced consultants like me to tell them certain things they might do. And you know, I have to be honest with you, in my view, and I think I know the newspaper business fairly well. I started in it when I was 9 years old and I've some kind of relationship with it ever since. And now that I'm 39, that's quite a long time. And I think I know something about education. And if I had to answer them honestly, I would have to say to them that the answer to their local relationships has been part of their organization all that time. And friends, if I can just get you to buy into my thesis, that despite all the other wonderful things NIE does for society, students, parents, teachers, the classroom, and for some aspects of the newspapers, it also does something even more wonderful and even more needed. And that is, in a world where every type of organization has to win public consent everyday to continue to survive, you are probably the only people on the newspaper payroll that are not out there asking somebody to give them something. We need circulation, Lord knows. And our circulation people have to get out and ask for us to subscribe. Our advertising people have to get out and ask people to give

us some revenues, some advertising. Our reporters have to go out and ask for the story. They have to sometimes use some pretty sophisticated techniques which upset people to get the story. But who of the newspaper is out there saying, "I have something at an incredibly low price that I want to give to you. This is our gift to the community because this operation already exists and we can put into your classroom at almost no cost."? As far as I know, that's you. And that, in my book, is building positive public relationships in a very real way.