



UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS LIBRARY
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
BOOKSTACKS

The person charging this material is responsible for its return to the library from which it was withdrawn on or before the **Latest Date** stamped below.

Theft, mutilation, and underlining of books are reasons for disciplinary action and may result in dismissal from the University.

To renew call Telephone Center, 333-8400

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS LIBRARY AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

DEC 16 1980

NOV 21 1980

APR 19 1983

MAR 22 1983

MAR 18 1984

31.1
I 165 in
no. 19
cop. 2

INSTITUTE OF



LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

704 S. Sixth Street

Champaign, Illinois

THE MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT LOOKS AT THE LABOR PRESS

BY ROBERT NEWCOMB AND
MARG SAMMONS

Newcomb and Sammons, Management and
Public Relations Consultants

LECTURE SERIES NO. 19

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

3211
I 26547
110-9
L 612

THE MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT LOOKS AT THE LABOR PRESS

by

Robert Newcomb and Marg Sammons

Newcomb and Sammons, Management & Public Relations Consultants, Chicago

(Talk given at a conference sponsored by the Midwest Labor Press Association and the University of Illinois Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations and Division of University Extension, May 6-7, 1960, at the LaSalle Hotel, Chicago.)

From Bob Newcomb:

Before I tell you anything else, I want to tell you that we feel that it is both a pleasure and a privilege to be invited to come here and talk with you editors. As a result of this association, we expect to go away with some constructive thoughts; in turn I hope we will be able to leave a few constructive thoughts with you. We are all in the same journalistic boat, and even though we all run into some rough seas now and then, I have a hunch that you wouldn't want to swap for another boat any more than we would.

Just for a second of historical background that has an application to the remarks we're going to make to you: During World War II Marg and I were assigned, as part of our small contribution to the war effort, to the copper mines of Montana. The War Department and the War Production Board jointly sent us there, mindful of the fact that copper was an essential metal and that copper management had leagued it up with the CIO and AFL there to form a labor-management committee. Our job was to help along the committee and turn out a labor-management newspaper.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

I'm not going to bore you with the details of this excursion into rawhide journalism. Let it only be said that it was a wild, wonderful, eye-opening experience--one we wouldn't have missed for the whole wide world. Our newspaper, as I said, was a joint labor-management effort--we had on our editorial board representatives from both AFL and CIO (you hadn't merged yet, of course) from the mines, the smelter, and the refinery.

Union representatives outnumbered management on the editorial board. If they had been so inclined, they could have made our assignment miserable, simply by exercising vigorously their right of censorship. But they never did. They worked hand-in-glove with the whole effort and every labor man on that board--and management man, too--gave the project sincere and continuous help. I grant you there was a war on and it was patriotic to cooperate, but the fact remains that we formed during that four-year period a respect for the journalistic capacities of our labor friends that we have never lost. A few of those editorial board members from the labor side still get to Chicago, and when they do, we always get together. These may not have been professional journalists, but all I can say is that they were born with a whale of an instinct for what makes news.

I mentioned that, as editors, we're all in the same boat. We were reminded of this only a few years ago when we listened to Doc Lewis, that fireball editor of the United Rubber Worker, now retired. In a speech before a group of management editors, he took his hair down. He confessed that he had problems, too--like meeting deadlines and being certain of his readership, of staying within the budget and of trying to keep everybody happy. I think all of us in the room sat

back and said, "Man, this fellow talks the editing language. He's got the same headaches we have." You can count on it; we've got a lot in common.

His talk was so interesting, and so much to the point for the editors of management publications, that Marg and I took notes on it and later incorporated them in a talk we made before the Silver Bay industrial relations conference at Lake George. You might like to hear briefly what Doc Lewis had to say about management--and union--publication work:

1. The union publication must keep "selling" its readers on the union: In this respect, it has precisely the same problems as management's press. But the labor press problem is less exacting because it can talk unionism in broad, national terms and be effective. The management press is effective chiefly when its messages have a local application.

2. The company publication for employees lacks an objective: The union publication has a clear purpose. But many company managements have not agreed on a purpose or objective for their own employee papers. Dr. Lewis implied that a company publication could be a strong influence in management's behalf, but that management refuses to recognize the power of one of its own tools.

3. Communications in companies have too many managers: It takes too long to reach the people, presumably because too many people in management must approve what is being said.

4. If you want to reach the people, go where they are: The copy handed out at the gate probably isn't read; at least it isn't read to the extent it would be if the copy were mailed home. The

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

...the ... of ...

Rubber Workers' union mails its copies to the members' homes and he estimated that 90 per cent of union papers are mailed to the homes, on the basis that distribution at the gate is a poor economy.

5. Management doesn't promote its own communications: This point is best made by an example. At the editors' conference, Dr. Lewis (a) described in detail the contents of a typical issue of the union's paper; (b) submitted to all sorts of questioning about it; (c) provided an individual copy for every delegate; (d) volunteered to have sent to every delegate's office, for a period of four months, a free copy; (e) invited every delegate to write in questions to him and to drop in and visit him at his office in Akron.

6. Management editors do not get out among their own people: Dr. Lewis said he spends more than 50 per cent of his time in the field.

Those were the Lewis comments.

* * * * *

I don't think any informed communications man in management has anything but respect for the strides the labor press itself has made in the past ten years. A lot of real professionalism has come into your labor journalism--good, level-headed, competent editorial craftsmanship, and don't think this has gone unnoticed by your fraternity brothers in management's journalistic circles. The communications men and women of management have a deep and healthy respect for you labor editors; I don't say that to flatter you--I say it to you because I have heard that tribute paid to you many times by the professionals

of management communication. Just so you won't let this go to your heads--I have also heard, from time to time, comments on your product that could never appropriately be published under the heading of "Fan Mail."

* * * * *

I said we thought labor journalism had come far in ten years, and that is very true. I also feel that management--in its communication with employees--has come far in an equal period of time. In respect to management journalism, however, I think we have all noted that a certain amount of major surgery has taken place.

Ten years actually isn't too long a time. Ten years ago Alger Hiss was convicted of perjury and Sen. McCarthy said 57 Communists were working in the State Department. Truman was president and in July he named MacArthur commander of the U. N. forces in Korea. Soon afterward the Reds captured Seoul. And ten years ago management publications were called "house organs" by practically everybody, and they talked almost exclusively of the social comings-and-goings of folks in the plant.

Today the company whose employee publication talks exclusively of social comings-and-goings is far behind the times--as much as ten years behind the times, and possibly even twenty.

A decade ago, most communications programs in companies were loose, ill-fitting semi-systems of relaying employer thoughts and opinions to employees. Today, at least in the more progressive concerns, employee communication has form and substance, consistency and continuity.

Any basic guide to employee communications programs must

acknowledge the sharp changes that have occurred in the field of employee communication. The text book of a decade ago doesn't apply too much today; even the article on techniques of a year or so ago may show some rust spots. One of the characteristics of modern employee communication is that it is in a state of constant change, development, improvement.

Employee communication today no longer depends upon a single medium of expression. It isn't altogether oral, nor completely written; it's a blending of the two. It's the management round table; the supervisory meeting; the group gathering of employees; it's individual counseling. It's the printed employee magazine, but it is also the employee newsletter, the bulletin board, the employee annual report, the payroll envelope insert, the recruitment manual, the plant tour and the open house. I believe that, as the field broadens, the quality tends to improve.

* * * * *

From Marg Sammons:

Here are nine suggestions for "selling" a communications program:

1. If you have a plan, try to relate it to a program.
2. Show how the union benefits, and forget how you benefit as an individual.
3. Develop fully the information about your idea.
4. Give your boss documented case studies to support the worth of your own suggestions.
5. Respect the chain of command, and enlist the cooperation of others.
6. Put the proposal in writing.

7. Suggest means for checking the effectiveness of your program.
8. Figure out the right channels to the boss.
9. Forget the personal credit, don't gripe at delays, and don't be discouraged by a refusal.

* * * * *

Ask yourself these questions concerning your own communications program:

1. Is the publication actually a medium of communication between the union and the members, or is it solely a recorder of syndicated material and chit-chat?
2. Does the publication announce, interpret, and explain policy--and programs--or does it let members find out about these things through rumor and hearsay?
3. Does the publication earnestly discuss the financial structure and operation of the union, so that members can understand--or does it wait until public sentiment smokes out the answers?
4. Is the publication based on a sound editorial policy, planned and programmed in advance--or is it put together on a hit-or-miss basis?
5. Is the publication modern in appearance and editorial treatment--or does it fail to stand up favorably in competition with the publications your members read by choice?
6. Is the publication adequately meshed in with the activities of the various departments of the union--or is it expected to go its own way as an orphan?

1950

Dear Mr. [Name]:
I have your letter of [Date] regarding [Topic].
I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time.
I will be in touch with you again in a few days.

Sincerely,
[Name]

I have also received your letter of [Date] regarding [Topic].
I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time.
I will be in touch with you again in a few days.

I have also received your letter of [Date] regarding [Topic].
I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time.
I will be in touch with you again in a few days.

I have also received your letter of [Date] regarding [Topic].
I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time.
I will be in touch with you again in a few days.

I have also received your letter of [Date] regarding [Topic].
I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time.
I will be in touch with you again in a few days.

I have also received your letter of [Date] regarding [Topic].
I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time.
I will be in touch with you again in a few days.

I have also received your letter of [Date] regarding [Topic].
I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time.
I will be in touch with you again in a few days.

I have also received your letter of [Date] regarding [Topic].
I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time.
I will be in touch with you again in a few days.

I have also received your letter of [Date] regarding [Topic].
I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time.
I will be in touch with you again in a few days.

7. Is the editor competent? Is he given the time to do his job well? Does he measure his personal importance by the size of the union he works for, or is he humble in the face of the big job he has to do?

8. Does the publication make it a point to link the member to his union, and the union to the democratic system--or does the union blindly take the members' love of the democratic system for granted?

9. Has the publication been efficiently set up, so that it appears regularly--or do confusions over policy, budget, copy approvals, and jurisdictions keep it in constant turmoil?

10. Last but far from least: Is the publication produced primarily to satisfy the union leaders--or are the interests, tastes, and concerns of the membership sincerely taken into account?

* * * * *

We are all in the business of communication. We are trying--all of us--to help build a better country and a better world to live in. Sometimes we may not agree as to method, and that's both natural and healthy. But we all agree as to objective. If we continue to maintain a real respect for the views of the other, and I'm sure we will, we can all go a long way together. Thank you.

:bd
ILIR 55 (59-60)
5/31/60

1. The first part of the document is a letter from the Secretary of the State to the Governor, dated the 10th of the month of the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two.

2. The second part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the State to the Governor, dated the 10th of the month of the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two.

3. The third part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the State to the Governor, dated the 10th of the month of the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two.

4. The fourth part of the document is a report from the Secretary of the State to the Governor, dated the 10th of the month of the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA

331.1 IL65IN C002 ~~1949~~ V. 6-Z2 (8D)
Lecture series: W/O no. 9, 15, 17) 1949-
1961



3 0112 087782436