

January/February/March 1999

**TO: Executive Addressed**

**FR: James E. Lukaszewski, APR, Fellow PRSA Chairman**

**RE: The Seventh Dimension of Crisis Management: Community and Professional Expectations**

In January 1999 Lawrence Ragan Communications introduced a new publication, the *Public Relations Journal*. The inaugural issue carried an article I authored entitled, "The Six Dimensions of Crisis Communications Management: A Strategic Analysis and Planning Model." The six dimensions described in this article deal with operations, victims, trust/credibility, behavior, ethics, and lessons learned.

For space reasons the editors could not include the seventh dimension of crisis communications management - community and professional expectations, which I'm now addressing here. This dimension just as critical as the other six because in litigation, increasingly juries look to industry standards and practices to help determine a factual basis for damages and compensation. When community and professional expectations merge in codes of conduct and codes of ethics, standards are the result.

At present, industry standards are set by the Public Relations Society of America's *PRSA Code of Professional Standards* and the International Association of Business Communicators' *IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators*. Here are selected excerpts from these two codes that most directly affect crisis communications management:

<b>Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)</b>	<b>International Association of Business Communicators (IABC)</b>
<p data-bbox="272 1354 678 1386"><i>Code of Professional Standards</i></p> <ul data-bbox="180 1430 824 1900" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shall conduct his/her professional life in accord with the public interest.</li><li>• Shall exemplify high standards of honesty and integrity.</li><li>• Shall deal fairly with the public, giving due respect to the ideal of free inquiry and to the opinions of others.</li><li>• Shall adhere to the highest standards of accuracy and truth, avoiding extravagant claims or unfair comparisons.</li></ul>	<p data-bbox="854 1354 1469 1386"><i>Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators</i></p> <ul data-bbox="881 1430 1498 1900" style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Practice honest, candid, and timely communication and foster the free flow of essential information in accord with the public interest.</li><li>• Sensitive to cultural values and beliefs and engage in fair and balanced communication activities that foster and encourage mutual understanding.</li><li>• Honest not only with others but also, and most importantly, with themselves as individuals; seeking the truth and speaking</li></ul>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shall not knowingly disseminate false or misleading information and shall act promptly to correct erroneous communications for which he or she is responsible.</li></ul> | that truth first to the self. |
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For a copy of the full text of the article, "Seven Dimensions of Crisis Communication Management: A Strategic Analysis and Planning Model," please go to Articles and Monographs and click on "The Seven Dimensions of Crisis Communications Management."

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