

## **ACTIVISM: PREPARING COUNTERACTIVE STRATEGIES**

If your product, business identity, or reputation is in the highest echelons of your business or activity category, you may already be the target of activist attack. These attacks are emotional, often so blatantly and intentionally inaccurate that companies, organizations, and individuals are paralyzed, victimized, and unable to effectively respond.

The range of anti-corporate activism covers a spectrum from the lone individual – perhaps an intensely focused disgruntled former employee or associate – to major collaborative efforts between religious organizations, labor groups, and non-government organizations (NGOs).

On the Web, if you want to quickly gain the scope of anti-corporate activism, go to Yahoo.com and click on “consumer opinion.” You’ll see hundreds of companies listed. Click on “boycotts” and you’ll find a list of nearly 1,000.

### **THE REALITY OF ACTIVISM**

Whether we like it or not, there are a handful of specific attributes, which are easily recognized and identified, for which appropriate counteractive strategies can be adopted. Four of the most potent current realities are:

- Emotionalism has replaced reason
- Activism has overtaken science and data
- Exaggeration has overwhelmed precision
- Grassroots manipulation is the new realism

Activist tactics haven’t changed much in decades, yet I’m surprised at how little serious study and analysis has been done by those who are the major targets of anti-corporate activist action. Perhaps the classic anti-government American activist of the last century was Saul Alinsky. He authored two important manuals on the topic, which are still critical references and teaching works in the activist arena today:

- *Reveille for Radicals*, Vintage Books, New York, © 1969
- *Rules for Radicals*, Vintage Books, New York, © 1971, revised edition, 1989



## PRODUCT DETAILS

Newsletter: 4 pages  
Language: English  
Price: \$5.00 U.S.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James E. Lukaszewski (loo-ka-SHEV-skee) advises, coaches, and counsels the men and women who run very large corporations and organizations. He is an expert in managing and counteracting tough, touchy, sensitive corporate communications issues. The fastest growing portion of his practice involves civil and criminal litigation. He is one of the few who can and truly does coach CEOs.

He is a prolific author (several books, hundreds of articles), lecturer (corporate, college and university), coach, and counselor. He is quoted in publications such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Miami Herald*, the *Harvard Business Review*, and industry trade journals. He is a columnist, advisor, or editor for almost every major public relations periodical. His 1992 book, *Influencing Public Attitudes: Strategies that Reduce the Media's Power*, remains a classic work in the field of direct communication. He is an internationally recognized speaker on crisis management, ethics, media relations, public affairs, and reputation preservation and restoration. Visiting his Web site, [www.e911.com](http://www.e911.com), is like attending the University of Crisis Management.

An accredited member of the International Association of Business Communicators (ABC) and the Public Relations Society of America (APR), Mr. Lukaszewski is a member of the PRSA's College of Fellows (Fellow PRSA) and Board of Ethics & Professional Standards. He served as a crisis communications advisor to the International Disaster Advisory Committee, Agency for International Development, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance from 1989 to 1992, and is a civilian advisor to several other federal agencies. He lectures annually at the U.S. Marine Corp's East Coast Commander's Media Training Symposium and was the second recipient of its Drew Middleton Award. He is the recipient of both Ball State University's 2004 National Public Relations Achievement Award and the 2004 Patrick Jackson Award for Distinguished Service to PRSA, and is among the winners of the 2005 *PR News* Lifetime Achievement Award. His name appeared in *Corporate Legal Times* as one of "28 Experts to Call When All Hell Breaks Loose," and in *PR Week* as one of 22 "crunch-time counselors who should be on the speed dial in a crisis."