

INFLUENCING MANAGEMENT ATTITUDES

Perhaps the most frustrating aspect to the practice of public relations has to do with our frequent inability to have true influence. Whether it's strategy, plans, goals, or tactics, beyond being told what to execute, how to execute it, what to say, and when to say it, we get shut out of the process and the key decisions. Getting the boss' ear remains one of the holy grails of public relations.

An important place to begin talking about developing strategies to get to the table, get in front of the boss(es), be heard, and have influence is to talk about three sure-fire strategies to fail:

1. Whine, criticize, and be generally negative, especially about the lawyers, while you're standing outside the door trying to get in too.
2. Focus on the unimportant
3. Teach PR.

At the 1999 Spring Conference of the Public Relations Society of America's Counselors Academy (PR agency owners and senior executives), a great deal of attention was paid to growing competition from management consultants, who are now moving aggressively into new practice areas, especially public relations, corporate communications, and reputation management. These consultants already have access to management and now may have found a useful format for keeping it.

Diane Roman Fusco, principal, Public Relations Consulting Practice, ORION Consulting Inc., talked about what it has been like to transform her practice from that of a public relations agency into the management consulting environment. One could tell her presentation was important because, at first, she irritated and angered just about everyone in the room as she carefully explained what the public relations consulting world looks like from the perspective of the management consultant.



PRODUCT DETAILS

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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, 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."