

newperspective

 marketwire
Proud platinum sponsor

In this issue

President's Message • Senior Communicator Profile – Karyn Toon • Get a Job Online • Internships A through Z: An Inside Look at Your First Job • Surviving and Thriving in Difficult Economic Times • Job Search • Book Reviews • The French Connection: CPRS Toronto's Bilingual Judging Team • What's Happening Around the CPRS Toronto? • How to add to the Canadian PR Body of Knowledge – Writing for PR and Getting Published

Extreme Focus, Relevance and Bottom Line Contribution are Required in Current Economy

By Joanne Rider



Public relations is the same, but different, in this economy. Smart practitioners are front and centre in bringing clarity and relevance to the situation as public and private entities explain corporate positions, engage employees, reassure investors and build consumer confidence.

Senior industry players indicate that priorities remain unchanged, but are extremely focused. Molson Canada, for example, has “a strategic plan in place that responds to dynamics at play in the general marketplace, so we are ready to address any opportunity, issue or change,” says Ferg Devins, vice president, government relations and public affairs. “We are communicating with and motivating our employees so they can focus on things that generate growth for the business.”

Likewise, Ron Christianson, director, external communications, McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Limited, says that it is “business as usual,” working in alignment with other functions to drive sales and guest counts by communicating their quality, employment leadership, product innovation and community support position.

Consumers need to have confidence in a company they buy a vehicle from, explains Lauren More, vice president, communications, Ford of Canada, which is in the midst of a significant push as it introduces seven new products in the coming months. “It is more important than ever to tell our unique corporate story; we haven't accessed government loans and got the capital we needed before the economy took a turn for the worse.”

Insights about how a company is viewed and what metrics are used by the investment community enable business leaders to make sound decisions, says Tom Enright, newly appointed president and CEO, Canadian Investor Relations Institute. “The top layer of companies made the commitment to have proven, solid, well-run I.R. functions in place and this is when they prove worth their salt.”

At Baycrest, Nancy Webb, vice president, public affairs and stakeholder relations says that they are “going global” with their overall ‘Innovation in Aging’ position, with plans to take advantage of a quiet marketplace to be as noisy as possible, and to make it the investment of choice for donors and policy

makers. “Unlike the private sector, we do not experience less business; patients still come to our door and require services,” she says.

GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY AND DOING MORE WITH LESS DOMINATE THE DISCUSSION

PR is faring better than its big budget marketing and advertising counterparts that are experiencing daily slash and burn sessions. Tightly controlled expenses are a given, both in terms of which communications channels are leveraged and whether work is done in-house or outsourced.

“We can respond to the unique challenges of our clients because there are no homogenous solutions,” says John Crean, national managing partner, NATIONAL Public Relations. “In difficult times PR consultants have a unique opportunity to add value in a more profound way than ever before; it is up to them to understand the challenges in a holistic way, and to help clients articulate and respond to these challenges.”

Still, agencies must be more accountable for fees charged because clients are scrutinizing sales and brand awareness results, says Lisa Gibson, associate vice president, media and public relations, Canadian Tire Corporation.

“No one really knows where this (economy) is going to take us and for how long,” Gibson says. “We are called on to be more innovative in supporting more priorities within the same or fewer financial resources, and need to make decisions about what is working, or not, in communicating the value proposition to consumers.” Yet, although in-house resources cost less, she says, there is a team burnout factor that can be offset by hiring consultants.

Many interviewed expect increased opportunities for freelancers, who often provide senior level expertise but usually incur lower overhead expenses and bill at lower rates than agency counterparts.

...continued on page 6

Galen G. Weston Receives 16th Annual CPRS Toronto CEO Award of Excellence in Public Relations



Mike Eppel, 680 News and emcee for the award luncheon, Dr. Gordon McIvor, founder of the award, presents Galen G. Weston with award. To read Weston's acceptance speech, please go to: <http://www.cprstoronto.com/ceo/ceoward.aspx>

President's Message:

Where to Turn When the Going gets Tough

By Lawrence Stevenson, APR



This will be my last newsletter message as president of CPRS Toronto as my two-year term expires as of our Annual General Meeting in May. The time has absolutely flown by and it has been one of the most enjoyable and rewarding periods in my professional life. The support and encouragement that I have received from all levels of the organization – from the board of directors, the volunteers, the committees, the sponsors, right down to the general membership – has been remarkable. I would particularly like to thank Lois Marsh for her ongoing commitment and professionalism – as secretariat, she is the unsung hero of CPRS Toronto.

In my tenure as president, one of the questions that I am most often asked is “what is the benefit of membership in CPRS”. I would like to take this opportunity to give a practical example that I hope answers this question – but first a minor segue.

This issue of New Perspective has a number of articles outlining communications in an economic downturn. Earlier this year, I found

myself a casualty of the faltering economy and on the job hunt. Even during the best of times, a job search can be a daunting process and can take its toll on even the most positive of attitudes. What got me through this time was the mentoring, advice and support that I received from my friends and colleagues within CPRS. My success in finding a new job was a direct result of the networking that I had done at professional development events, the committees on which I had served, the connections that I had made at speaking engagements, and the friendships that I had cultivated throughout the years.

So when people ask me to elaborate on the benefit of being a member of CPRS, I point them to the value of being a member of a family. CPRS Toronto, as a family, has been around for 60 years and it has been my pleasure to serve at the head of the table for the past two.

Lawrence Stevenson, APR is President of CPRS Toronto. He can be reached at ljstoronto@rogers.com.

Senior Communicator Profile – Karyn Toon

By Sheila Corriveau



For more than 20 years, Karyn Toon has been a CPRS member. When I met with her to discuss the rewards of our profession and benefits of membership, she was most welcoming and proud to host a tour of the offices of Allstate Insurance Company in Markham.

Toon has been with Allstate since 1994 and is currently director of corporate relations. She manages corporate communications, public affairs and stakeholder relations for Allstate Canada Group, including Allstate, Pembridge and Pafco insurance companies. Prior to joining Allstate, she held management positions in both agency and corporate environments.

...continued on page 8

ROI 2.0

Master the Power of Social Media Marketing

Learn how to make the most of the global conversation and create your own social media strategy. Four intensive 90-minute webinars will teach you how to boost ROI, generate leads and build your brand. Register now: www.marketwire.com/SMstrategy


marketwire
416.941.6393

Social Media Get a Job Online

By Christie Adams



Forget the old adage “It’s not what you know—it’s who you know.” Who you know now includes people you might never have even met in the real world. It’s becoming more and more likely your next career move will come courtesy of someone you know only through social media.

Social media hasn’t just changed the way we do our jobs. It’s changed the way we build our careers.

Business deals have been struck and new employees hired just based on the image they’ve built of themselves on social media sites. And in today’s economy, personal branding over social media may be the best thing to happen for public relations professionals hanging out their virtual shingles.

“There are so many tools you can use over social media that can leverage your ability to meet new people,” says Randy Tyrell, a founder of Toronto

Open Networking, which hosts several professional networking events each month. “I think it’s valuable for finding a new job, and an invaluable tool for people just starting their career.”

Tyrell first started building a personal brand online ten years ago, when he created a personal website and started including the URL on his resumes. It landed him his first job. He scored his current position as an analyst with iVedha after the company’s vice-president viewed his LinkedIn profile. And he’s since used LinkedIn and Facebook to recruit new employees.

It’s not enough to just have a social media presence, however. Tyrell offers some advice on what to include – and what to avoid – in your social media profile to build an excellent personal brand.

- Treat your profile like your resume. “What’s on your resume should be on your profile,” says Tyrell. Include your goals, what you’re looking for in your career.

- Keep it updated. It’s not enough to create a one-off effort and then never visit your page again, Tyrell says. Outdated information will reflect badly on you, while consistent usage of your profile will show up in updates to the main page.
- Choose an appropriate profile photo. It doesn’t have to be a sterile head shot – in fact, a picture where you’re relaxed and doing something you enjoy will provide a more realistic image of yourself.
- Don’t be afraid to inject personality. “You don’t want to include anything detrimental but you do want to inject your personal flavour. Employers look for that, and I think a lot of young people don’t realize that.” Include your hobbies and interests, and if you’re on LinkedIn and Facebook, join some related groups. Be active in these groups, as it could attract the notice of a potential employer.
- Keep your professional and private lives separate. Tyrell says it’s amazing how many new

professionals have photos of themselves drinking or in skimpy clothing that are visible to all on their social media profiles. “What you’re broadcasting to the world is your message. Keep in mind your audience.”

Two solutions are to adjust your privacy settings (so only close friends can see your photos) or even create two separate profiles – one professional, one personal. You wouldn’t mention on your resume that you like staying out until 3am on Saturday nights, so why would you imply that on your professional profile?

Tyrell’s most important suggestion – go offline. If you find out about a workshop or networking event over Facebook, make sure you attend it. Follow up with people you meet over social networks, and stay in touch.

“Social media is a great way to lay the foundations for connections,” Tyrell says, “but there’s still nothing that beats face-to-face communication.”

Christie Adams is Communications Director at Insideout Health And Wellness. She can be reached at: Christie.lea.adams@gmail.com

Internships A through Z: An Inside Look at Your First Job

By Laura Ballantyne



For students studying public relations, an internship is an opportunity to put their acquired knowledge and skills to use in the fast paced world of PR. When the internship search begins limitless questions arise in students’ minds. These questions truly do not have one answer – every student, company and project is vastly different and unique. The most valuable resources available to questioning students are their peers, professors and mentors. In order to answer some of the most burning internship queries we looked to CPRS Toronto’s membership, made up of current and past interns, host companies and internship coordinators.

“A good intern has several qualities: a great attitude, enthusiasm, an eagerness to learn, being proactive, asking for feedback whenever possible, and meeting for coffee/ informational interviews with as many people as possible within the organization.” *Kristen Marano, Humber College graduate and account coordinator at Environics Communications and former intern.*

“Do your homework and know what’s out there but be open to experiences you may not have thought of. Many students think they know where they want to land and what kind of PR they want to practice. When you’re starting out, there’s opportunity to learn from every work experience. Don’t shy away from a position that’s not in line with your initial ‘vision.’ You never know what it can turn into or where it can lead. Once on the internship, my recommendations would be to challenge yourself, communicate with your managers as you would communicate with a client, and seek out opportunities to work with different people and on different client account teams to add value in a variety of ways. *Alyssa Sotak, account manager at Optimum PR, a host company.*

“As a PR intern I never thought I would learn so much so quickly. I worked on a wide range of tasks. Furthermore, I was guided by a co-worker who gave me tasks that challenged me, but was also excellent at providing help when I was unsure. The most valuable thing I learned during my internship was learning what I was capable of. After those few months I felt I had tried many things once, so I felt that in the future I would be far more confident doing

them again. For example, the first time I made a media call I was petrified, but now I love talking to the media and figuring out how I can give them what they need to do their story. *Miranda Germani, current member of the ACE Awards committee and former intern.*

“What qualities make a good intern? Eagerness to learn – and that means everything about the organization, the climate in which it does business, and its customers. Bring your enthusiasm and energy – we need it! And while I have had some sponsors tell me that they will not be able to take an intern this semester, don’t let that worry you. The economic climate will also mean that some organizations will look at having an intern for the first time. Change always brings opportunities.” *Elizabeth Duncan, Humber College internship coordinator.*

“After being in the classroom for the last two plus years, I was looking to apply what I had learned to the internship. I was expecting a very hands-on approach and to further develop as a young PR practitioner. Mostly, I was expecting to be challenged in all aspects with the opportunity to show what I am capable of. The ability to acknowledge that

everything is a learning experience and to not be afraid to make mistakes. Showing initiative is key, but so too is asking questions. Be a sponge and absorb as much as you can. Lastly, attitude is everything! *Sebastian Gatica, Humber College diploma student and current intern.*

Taking the information students have learned from the page of a book to the fast paced world of PR can be extremely daunting yet exhilarating. They are sufficiently groomed on workplace etiquette, appropriate business attire, and how to draft a newsworthy media kit. However, there is no way to completely prepare students for their internships. Students – ask questions, a million questions. Because, without asking you will never learn.

The final piece of advice from Elizabeth Duncan, “Be professional. Invest in a classic but stylish wardrobe, make sure your work is error free, conduct yourself with impeccable manners, and you’ll be head and shoulders above the rest.”

Laura Ballantyne is the CPRS Toronto Student Representative for 2008 to 2009 and a class representative for Humber third-year students, where she is currently completing her three-year advanced public relations diploma.

Surviving and Thriving in Difficult Economic Times

By Christian Hasse



"If it bleeds, it leads." That has been the motto of media outlets since the dawn of the medium.

I think it is fair to say that the current state of

the economy is not just bleeding, it's hemorrhaging. Sadly, we are bombarded with daily accounts of corporations wielding the axe on thousands of jobs. And, depending on whom you listen to, the light at the end of the tunnel is rather dim.

But I would argue it's not all doom and gloom. As a recruiter with Cramer & Company, I know there are jobs out there. There are also ways for PR practitioners to re-invent themselves, solidify their positions within their organizations, and even ways to thrive, despite the bad news.

Heed this advice and you can survive and thrive, now and in the future.

IT'S A NEW ERA IN PR

Gone are the days when most PR people with good writing skills and key media contacts were enough. Today, communicators need to have a broader set of skills. There has never been a better time for PR professionals to demonstrate their importance in controlling a crisis while building a positive corporate image and protecting investor perception in the face of negative media attention.

Studies show that the companies who can clearly articulate a simple, consistent message are best able to weather tough economic times.

FIND OPPORTUNITIES

So in these tough economic times, there are opportunities for savvy PR people. Here's why:

- Communicators who effectively manage the storm will have a strong set of skills they can leverage and have greater confidence in their abilities.
- Corporations, now more than ever, need to engage their workforce and motivate employees. Communicators should lend support to HR departments to deliver effective employee programs, making your role valuable to more departments within the organization.
- You know how to make headlines. There is so much negative news out there today, be on the lookout for opportunities to tell a positive story to the media and leverage it to garner positive media attention. Your boss will love it.

- You've got your fingers on the public pulse. Knowledge is power for PR people so stay informed by reading newspapers, reading online news and blogs and broadening your expertise beyond your industry sector. Share this global perspective with management.

PLAN YOUR CAREER

Even while you are looking for ways to protect your position, you need to make sure you don't lose touch with your longer term goals. The economic woes we are facing are short term, so it's important to keep in touch with the bigger picture and career aspirations.

Chart your career path, starting with where you are today, and where you want to be. Add timelines for reaching these goals and gaining the experience you need to get there. Set goals for yourself – both personally and professionally. Make them tangible with timelines to achieve each part of the major goal. Once you've written the goals down, start working on them.

Start investing in your career by taking new courses, volunteering or taking on new projects at work to build the skill set you will need to achieve your longer term goals. This might even be a good time to make a lateral move that can better position you for the future.

Join associations (CPRS, IABC, CIRI) and participate. The more your name is seen and heard, the more likely it is you will hear about opportunities. As I have said before, there are jobs out there but many of them aren't published. You'd be surprised to learn who is and isn't hiring, and the more people you connect with, the larger your pool of information about this "hidden" job market. Use networking events, lunches and electronic methods to keep in touch with your contacts.

Update your resume and ensure your portfolio is up-to-date. You need to be well prepared for the phone call that could bring you a dream job.

WHEN BAD NEWS HITS

While no one wants to hear the words "we have to let you go," how you react to the news can change your future. It could be the beginning of a new and exciting opportunity to branch out – if you let it.

If you are let go, you may not be allowed back to your office to recoup important documents. You will need a stellar portfolio of work for the interviews ahead so pull it together now.

Start networking right away. Don't cocoon. Don't mourn the job loss. (OK, you can for a day or two but then get right back up on that horse.)

Start setting up appointments with recruiters right away. Call contacts and attend events and tell people you are looking. Networking is key!

Consider contract work. In the past few months, I have met with countless PR pros that have turned a layoff into a thriving business. Companies consider contract workers for a variety of reasons:

- There is little or no overhead and no benefits or taxes to be paid by the company. This saves them money.
- Contractors have to be very productive if they want to retain clients and bring in new business through a stellar reputation of delivering results.
- Contractors help keep the "head-count" low, which is important for companies looking to bolster their bottom line.
- For a contractor, small contracts can turn into a profitable consulting business. They can pick up a wide variety of projects in different sectors, expanding their knowledge base and improving their skill-set.

Despite what you hear daily in the news, there are opportunities. With the right preparation and attitude, you can thrive.

How to protect your job

1. Think about how your work can impact the bottom line of your firm.
2. Diversify. Now is a great time to invest in education. Learn new skills, tools and tactics that help expand your company's PR footprint.
3. Cut back on your budgets or expenses. Saving small dollars could protect larger dollars (like your position)! You will also be seen as a team player.
4. Don't complain. Step up and take the initiative. It shows leadership and teamwork.
5. Make a positive impact on the people around you, whether they are above you or below you on the corporate ladder. Become an invaluable resource to those around you and you will take great strides in protecting your position.

Christian Hasse is a Search Consultant at Cramer Company International. He can be reached at Christian@cramercompany.com.

CPRS National Conference 2009

June 7 – 9, 2009

Vancouver, British Columbia

For more information and to register please visit:

www.cprs.ca/vancouver2009

On The Edge / À la fine pointe

Canadian Public Relations Conference
Vancouver '09

La conférence canadienne des relations publiques
Vancouver '09

Job Search



By Patricia Tallidis



Ask anyone who has been faced with the daunting task of searching for a job, especially one coupled with a career shift, and they will quickly

attest to the frustration, exercise of patience, and huge test on your self-esteem the process entails.

The days of 'pounding the pavement' and 'knocking on doors' are gone. The old cliché 'it's who you know, not what you know' used to be the way of the world, but in today's society, we're told the search is much easier – now, the jobs come to you!

Technological advancements like company websites and online job boards bring opportunities to the job seeker, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. At first glance, it appears as though you are really putting yourself and your talents out there. But how effective is it?

From personal experience, I know that posting a resume on a job board or applying online are two of the most time consuming exercises and tests of patience one can ever engage in. After spending hours revising resumes to adhere to the preferred terminology of each hiring manager, seekers go online to apply, creating log-on IDs for virtually every company site on the planet. They then fill in the blanks and required fields, and once again, re-format their beautiful Word document because the 'text' setting on the site doesn't recognize pretty fonts and centering. So, you fuss over the details,

AGAIN, and when you are finally satisfied with the end result, you cross your fingers, hit the "send" button and 99.9% of the time, you hear or receive – nothing.

In all fairness, occasionally, to assure you that you're not totally wasting your time and to give you a small glimmer of hope, an email arrives, thanking you for your interest and confirming the receipt of your application.

The beautifully composed summary of all your talents, strengths and skills has now, officially, entered into the proverbial 'black hole' of resumes, never to be heard, seen or looked at again.

THIS, my friends, is the way of the modern job hunt!!

So, it turns out that going back to the basics is the way to go, because after all, when the dust settles and the smoke clears, it all boils down to one thing: "Who do you know that I should meet?"

A career management program I took last year indicated that 80% of the job market is hidden, and that only 20% of job hunters know how to tap into it. So how do you access it? Simple. Networking. After 17 years in the banking world, I had no idea what networking was, and worse, no clue how to do it. I'm still not entirely comfortable with it. Yet, after months of looking for a job, I finally landed my first interview and hopefully a new job. How? I knew someone, who knew someone, who needs someone.

Patricia Tallidis is a former banking and finance professional who is currently shifting careers to the public relations field. Contact Patricia at patricia.tallidis@rogers.com.

CPRS Toronto Reference Section Donation

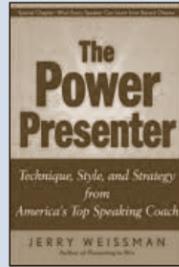


Julie Flynn-Still, Manager, Strategic Partnerships and Events for the Toronto Public Library Foundation accepts a cheque from Laurence Stevenson, President of CPRS Toronto for the continued support and maintenance of the CPRS Toronto Reference Section.

Book Reviews

By Joanna Nicholson

Corporate Communications and Public Relations Student,
Centennial College

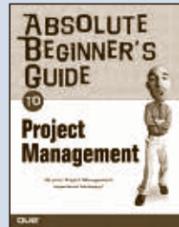


THE POWER PRESENTER: TECHNIQUE, STYLE, AND STRATEGY FROM AMERICA'S TOP SPEAKING COACH

Author: Jerry Weissman

Publisher: Wiley (February 3, 2009)

Jerry Weissman, one of America's leading corporate presentations coaches, shares his secrets to delivering your most powerful presentation. With an impressive list of clients including top executives at Yahoo!, he outlines his unique seven step formula to engage audiences, instill confidence and ease nerves. This book is sure to capture your interest with case studies about John F. Kennedy and Barack Obama and make you feel more confident delivering all types of presentations. Your next PR presentation will surely be a success!

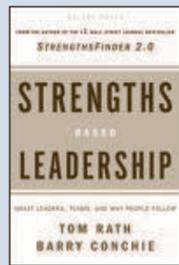


ABSOLUTE BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Author: Greg Horine

Publisher: Que; 2nd. edition (January 26, 2009)

Newcomers to the public relations field should consider this book a project management bible. Written in an easy to read, step-by-step format, this book will help you manage any project from start to finish almost effortlessly. With over 20 years of project management experience, Horine offers insight on key project management issues and topics and offers ample guidance. Learn how to use Microsoft Project more effectively and emerge a true leader after reading this book. A great addition to any PR resource library!



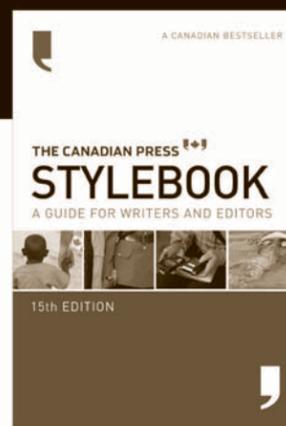
STRENGTHS-BASED LEADERSHIP

Author: Tom Rath

Publisher: Gallup Press; 1 edition (January 6, 2009)

From Tom Rath, author of #1 bestseller StrengthsFinder 2.0, comes an informative sequel that reveals the four domains to becoming a more successful leader. This research-heavy book examines how effective leaders of the past have used their strengths to drive them to achieving their goals. It's an invaluable addition to any PR practitioner's resource library, and even includes an interactive element to help you explore your strengths and emerge as the best leader you can be. Take the first step to becoming a great leader and read this book!

FREE TRIAL OF NEW ONLINE STYLEBOOKS



The much-anticipated fully searchable online version of The Canadian Press Stylebook and Caps and Spelling is now available!



CPRS Toronto members can take advantage of a complimentary one-week trial of the online books by contacting 416-507-2019 or onlinestylebooks@thecanadianpress.com.

Contact us today to start experiencing the many benefits of the online books, including:

- The speed of real-time updates and email notifications of style changes or new content added by the editor of the stylebooks.
- The power of using the basic and advanced search tools to quickly scan both stylebooks for your keywords to see relevant entries.
- The flexibility of adding your own notes, examples, style rules and commonly misspelled words to complement the existing books.

www.thecanadianpress.com/books

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The French Connection: CPRS Toronto's Bilingual Judging Team

By David Rowney



Nous sommes arrivés.

There was a time when French entries to the CPRS national awards program were judged only in Quebec, with help from one or two Ottawa Society members.

Four years ago that all changed, when CPRS Toronto agreed to host

a bilingual team. "For too long it seemed the only bilingual people in Canada were in Montreal, Quebec and Ottawa. But things have changed and the country's dream of bilingualism and biculturalism has come a long way," says Lesley Spencer, APR, one of the team's judges.

Having bilingual teams from outside of Quebec demonstrates the diversity of our membership and utilizes the talents of a larger judging pool, says National CPRS Executive Director Karen Dalton, APR.

Along with Lesley, Daniel Torchia, APR has been one of the mainstays of the judging team. Growing up in Montreal, where he honed his French, Daniel has combined his interests in languages and public relations to create, with the help of the Public Relations and Communications Foundation, a scholarship for bilingual communications students. "Learning another language, particularly French, is invaluable. It really immerses you in another culture, in this case a culture that belongs to so many fellow Canadians. In learning a new language, we learn more about ourselves," he says.

Lesley is a Fellow CPRS (FCPRS), Life Member, and principal of LPS&A Strategic Communications. She learned to speak French while in England as a child. "But I really discovered the French language when our family started to take holidays in Europe and I found that people actually communicated on a daily basis by using this language, as I also learned that Latin, with a bit of a tweak, worked quite well in Italy. That's when I discovered that I had a facility for learning and speaking other languages."

Lesley and Daniel were asked how learning French has helped them in their careers. "Knowing French has helped me to understand or appreciate the behaviours of elements of Québécois culture – as well as some of the challenges facing Quebecers and other Canadians. It also allowed me to enjoy culture in a new way: French movies, theatre, comedy, music, etc. That's very valuable. It also allows me to contribute to numerous French/English projects," says Daniel.

Adds Lesley: "I would say that speaking French has simply been part of my life. It's simply part of my tool kit, along with other skills, and the ability to communicate in French allows one to relate better to francophone issues."

Long-time CPRS members Aimee Savard, David Magil, John Wildgust, Darryl Perry and Lydia Boyko, APR have also participated on the French judging panel. John used to work for the Montreal Star and was

...continued on page 8

Extreme Focus, Relevance and Bottom Line Contribution are Required in Current Economy

continued from page 1...

E-STRATEGIES COST LESS AND EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS

Consumers' reluctance and skepticism in tough times can translate into a need for more in-depth information before making a purchasing decision. "PR can deliver a credible message and turn on a dime in disseminating information through traditional and social media," says APEX Public Relations president Pat McNamara. "With PR, an opportunity can be seized very quickly, which is crucial in a competitive business environment."

Brands like Molson increasingly integrate traditional media with social and digital media campaigns to get messages out and to listen to consumers and employees. Lower costs and direct consumer access make them attractive, especially as media outlets cut jobs and cover less.

Baycrest is also ramping up its e-strategy as a means to communicate its global scope and need for support, letting go of traditional methods like print materials and challenging everyone to look at things differently.

Overall, no one really knows where things will net out. Practitioners must "speak the language of business. We want to be helpful members who really contribute and make it relevant," Ford's More says. "People running the business are extremely focused on making tough decisions."

Despite challenges, there can be a lot opportunity for those who are brave enough not to retreat.

"We are going to be really creative and are going to go full force ahead," concludes Webb. "It is not for the faint of heart because, if you fail, you're going to fail really big in this economy."



Flexibility, Patience And Perseverance Are Required In This Job Market

Recruiters are in a "wait and see" mode to determine the longer term impact, but there is a definitive shift to a more flexible workforce through more temporary, contract or freelance work. As Canada's jobless rate rose to 6.6% in December 2008, the industry is holding its own.

"Despite what we hear on the news about the economy, people are still hiring ... but they may be hiring in a different way," says Roxanne Cramer, Cramer Company International. "Employers are more cautious and taking more time to make decisions about potential new hires. They are focused on meeting short-term needs and ... many don't have budget to add full-time resources to their teams. A common thread is that companies want staff that can positively impact the bottom line."

Susan Rogers, Susan Rogers Executive Recruitment, hasn't witnessed a major surge in layoffs, other than in predictable sectors like financial services and embattled companies like Nortel. The proof will be in the pudding as companies finalize staffing strategies for 2009. Still, those who delay in making hiring decisions risk having top tier candidates snapped up by others.

There is a high demand for interns but these rarely turn into full-time positions, says Christine Smith, coordinator of the corporate communications program at Centennial College. "Crackerjack candidates" who approach their job search in an intense, professional way usually land in short order, she says, often in contract positions. Recent graduate April Tsui is a case in point. Assuming she was agency-bound, Tsui finished her field placement last fall and accepted a contract position at Durham Region, and is happy she did.

Rogers advises new grads to shed any sense of entitlement to jobs and to be realistic. "People are wary of changing jobs now so those who are looking need to be persistent and network, network, network," she says.



What's Happening Around the CPRS Toronto?



◀ CPRS Toronto ACE Award 2009 judges met downtown in March to judge entries. Seen here are Martin Waxman APR and Vince Power APR. Winners announced at the ACE Awards Gala on April 21, 2009 will be high-lighted in the next issue.

▶ "Don't Fear, Diversify Your Career" CPRS Toronto professional development event at the Albany Club in Toronto, Wednesday, February 25, 2009. PR practitioner John Challinor II, Director of Corporate Affairs for Nestlé Canada leads a discussion with a panel of PR professionals Chris Churchill, Christian Hasse and Jodi Salem, who have successfully diversified their careers.

CPRS Toronto/The Canadian Press Images



MEDIAVANTAGE

ANOTHER BRIGHT IDEA THAT GOES BEYOND THE NEWSWIRE.

Manage and monitor communications more efficiently plus collaborate more effectively with MediaVantage.

It's another of the many ways Canada's most trusted news source can help lighten your load and control costs.



CNW GROUP

www.newswire.ca/mediavantage
1.877.CNW.7890

Powered by  PRA 13

Senior Communicator Profile

continued from page 2...



Corriveau: What has been the single biggest change in our industry during your career?

Toon: The accessibility of tools and resources

affecting the nature of our work. Look at how our industry started off with typesetters, but now a Mac empowers communicators to oversee their own production. Everyone can now be a communicator. PR pros are needed more than ever to synthesize, craft context and meaning, and use the right tools for their audience.

Corriveau: What needs to change in our industry?

Toon: A mass audience no longer exists for one-way messaging. We need to reach and leverage our audience by being better educated about their needs, realizing diversity and knowing a customer's expectations. We spend too much time focused on how to make tools and resources penetrate the audience. Instead, we need to understand how each target would prefer to dialogue.

Corriveau: What is your proudest accomplishment in your career?

Toon: I am proud of my long-term role with Allstate, but my greatest achievement is my staff. From humble, tactically-focused beginnings we have grown to a vibrant team of collaborators in two provinces that deliver value every day. They have a proven track record in reaching audiences and are consistently invited to the table to help drive our business. We work together to influence strategy, and invent new ways to add value to product innovations, systems, financials and other areas of our business.

Corriveau: How do you measure success?

Toon: I measure success by the engagement of my colleagues. I gauge this success during our regular employee performance reviews and checkpoints with senior leadership. You could call it the never-ending exit interview of success.

This feedback is reinforced if they feel recognized and understand the value of communications in enabling business.

We also have formal measurement, such as focus groups, online panels, and mystery shopping for both internal and external customers.

Corriveau: What disappointment did you learn from in your career?

Toon: I thought that because I was a communicator I would be a good public speaker. I missed a real opportunity to influence 150 managers. During my speech, I could see the audience had

glazed eyes. I lost them early in my presentation. Since then, I have taken several courses to be a better public speaker and I do more rehearsal before any talk.

Corriveau: What is the best advice someone has given you in your career?

Toon: When I was agency side, I was given ownership of a production project for a major client. Back then, the glue used in brochures was not the same quality as today. Thousands of brochures were ruined on my watch. I was devastated. I thought I would get fired. Instead, my boss said: "You learned a lesson. You are allowed one mistake because I know you were trying but if you make the same mistake twice, you will lose your job." Be accountable, be fair, and always set a benchmark with your colleagues.

Corriveau: What is your advice for new communicators?

Toon: 1. Invest yourself in understanding the business that you are servicing. Be able to talk strategy with the president, numbers with the CFO, customers with distribution, and employee satisfaction with human resources.

2. Be an active listener. If it was easy, everyone would do it well.

3. Be passionate about the big idea. Don't let aspirations get overwhelmed by operational details. Be tenacious to make it happen.

Corriveau: How can people achieve work-life balance in a world that is so connected?

Toon: We need master degrees in establishing priorities. We promote SMART goals when prioritizing tasks. If you have to carve out five things to do, it sure helps if you recognize the value of the request and feel passionate about the responsibilities.

Corriveau: Why are you a member of CPRS Toronto?

Toon: We need a professional organization to advocate. I have also learned from member experts but I especially appreciate knowing that I am never alone. We all share similar challenges.

Corriveau: What's the single biggest benefit of being a long-time CPRS member?

Toon: CPRS offers a focused and professional resource for recruitment.

Sheila Corriveau is a Partner in AgencyLink Inc. (www.agencylink.ca). The marketing consultancy conducts agency searches, consults and delivers workshops to improve client-agency relationships and performance. She can be reached at sheila@agencylink.ca.

How to add to the Canadian PR Body of Knowledge –

Writing for PR and Getting Published



Recently published public relations authors from top: Al Czarnecki, APR, Mark LaVigne, APR, and Susan Sommers donated copies of their books to the Toronto CPRS section at the Toronto Reference Library. These authors were panelists providing insights into the publishing world at a CPRS professional development session in January.

The French Connection

continued from page 6...

immersed in reading a couple of French-language newspapers every day. Having first learned Spanish helped him to better understand foreign sounds and grammar rules.

"Bilingualism has been a huge career asset, both as a journalist and in later moving to the PR universe as director of communications for the National Research Council. Knowing another

language yields so many new insights into how the world and people work," says John.

Judging for the national awards will take place this spring with the Toronto national "bilingual team" again lending a hand. If you would like to be involved as a bilingual judge or bilingual APR grader, contact the national office.

David Rowney APR is the judging coordinator of the Toronto bilingual team. Contact Dave at rowney@sympatico.ca.

newperspective
new

New Perspective is published four times a year by the Canadian Public Relations Society Toronto.

Editorial Team: Lizamor Barrera, Patricia Tallidis, Kristen Marano, Laura Ballantyne, Christie Adams, Lynn Flecke and Sheila Corriveau.

Maryjane Martin, APR, Editor

Your contributions are welcome. Contact Maryjane Martin, APR at mjmartin@primus.ca.

To inquire about advertising rates or to book an ad, please contact Lois Marsh at marshl@marsh-executive.com

If you would like to contact CPRS Toronto, you can telephone us at (416) 360-1988, fax at (416) 369-0515 or visit the CPRS Toronto website at www.cprstoronto.com

New Perspective is designed and produced by:



daworx graphics inc.