

May We Introduce

This is the first issue of The Ammerman Experience *Advisor*, a newsletter for clients and others.

In today's world, exploring and embracing new ideas, new approaches and new techniques are the first steps toward performance improvement. It's true in any field: in athletics, in medicine, in business – including your business. As a leading communications skills development firm, we pioneered a wide range of interactive seminars, workshops and training sessions designed to show people how to face the media, manage crisis situations, speak at public meetings, and deliver effective sales, analyst and other business presentations.

Through this newsletter, we intend to share some of our communications expertise in these areas with you.

The mission of our firm is to help our clients succeed in the communications arena. The mission of this publication is to provide you with thoughtful, useful, state-of-the-art information to help you do that.

And because the best communication is two-way, your comments about this issue and future issues are most welcome. So are your content suggestions. *To communicate with us, contact Ken Haseley at 1-800-866-2026, or by E-mail at ammerman@ammermanexperience.com*

IN THIS ISSUE

PAGE 1
Who Speaks for Your Industry?
Declining a media interview is common practice. It may also be a mistake. Some reasons to reconsider the next time a business reporter calls.

PAGE 3
Mastering the Remote (Interview)
Remote TV interviews are now routine, but the challenges they present are not. How to succeed.

PAGE 4
Case Study
How one leading electric utility met the challenge of communicating its Toxics Release Inventory data to the public.

PAGE 5
Two New Seminar Offerings
• Effective Media Communications for Marketing Professionals
• Advanced Media Skills for Communications Professionals

PAGE 6
In Brief
• Another Reason to Gesture. Gesturing while you speak can improve your recall ability.
• Communicating TRI Data: Guidelines for Success. Forward-thinking firms are communicating their Toxics Release Inventory data beyond EPA to help shape the message that reaches the public. Free reprint available.
• Qualities That Count. Communication skills: not just for managers anymore.
• Communicating Worst-Case Scenarios. Newly enacted legislation requires certain facilities to hold public meetings. Free booklet offers guidelines for success.

PAGE 7
What's Your CQ (Communications Quotient)?
How much do you really know about effective communication? Take our quick quiz to find out.

PAGE 8
The Ammerman Experience Calendar

Who Speaks for Your Industry?

As one of your company's marketing professionals, you get a call from a trade press reporter who follows your industry. He's doing a market update and would like your perspective on current and future market conditions. You see no benefit in talking to him, only quite a few risks: Perhaps he'll ask some questions you'd rather not answer. ("Why are prices and volumes falling?") Maybe you'll reveal sensitive company or industry information. Talking to him might be against company policy. What if you're misquoted? Besides, you really don't have time. You're even slightly resentful (if not envious) of someone whose raw material – your knowledge – is obtained for free.

Interviews are often as much an opportunity to obtain information as they are to provide it.

Declining such an interview is common practice. It may also be a mistake. Here are some reasons to reconsider the next time you're called:

Serving as an industry spokesperson affords you and your company a visibility which often is seen as leadership. People like doing business with industry leaders, and speaking for your industry is one way to demonstrate leadership. Seeing or hearing your views expressed publicly, customers gain reassurance that their purchasing decision was correct. Former customers may reevaluate their decision to go elsewhere. Prospects may decide to take a closer look at you.

One of the world's largest producers of

SEE WHO SPEAKS on page 2.

WHO SPEAKS - Continued from page 1.

several key commodity chemicals purposely invested management time and effort to establish and cultivate relationships with the trade press and analyst community. Consequently, the company is considered one of the most knowledgeable and accessible sources of market information about these chemicals. If a reporter wants an in-depth look at that segment of the chemical industry, chances are he or she will call that firm.

Talking to the trade press and other business reporters is a way to shape the discussion of key issues within your industry. "Be willing to talk" is a cardinal rule of media relations in any crisis situation. It's not bad advice for those with marketing responsibilities either. Reporters will write their stories with or without your help. If you're not willing to talk, don't be disappointed to see an analysis that misses the mark, or surprised to find the views only of a competitor, a consultant or someone marginally involved in your industry represented in the story.

Some years ago, a business manager complained to me that the market updates in his industry's leading trade publication always seemed to have a particular slant. As it turned out, no one representing any of the manufacturers was willing to talk, so the reporter regularly called a distributor, whose market analysis understandably reflected his particular perspective. When the business manager finally agreed to be interviewed, the publication's market updates began to contain insights only a manufacturer could provide.

Bill Gates' accessibility to the media (he even agreed to a *Playboy* interview in order to promote his ideas) is one way Microsoft is able to influence the discussion of computer software.

Few business people who talk to reporters consider an interview a two-way street. Most are passive rather than active participants – and simply respond to questions, never thinking to ask a few of

their own. Yet, interviews are often as much an opportunity to obtain information as they are to provide it. Reporters who closely follow an industry regularly talk to various sources: manufacturers, distributors, customers, consultants, regulators, legislators. As a result, they uncover a wealth of information, not all of which is reported. Contrary to popular belief, most reporters will gladly "share the wealth," but only if asked.

One of the most effective industry spokesmen I know is a vice president who never lets an interview end without asking a few probing questions of his own: "Is my assessment of the

market shared by others you've talked to?" If not, "In what ways do their views differ?" "Has anyone in the industry mentioned any plans to expand or consolidate?"

Convinced that talking with the media can be worthwhile? Here are some guidelines to help you succeed:

- Put yourself in direct contact with reporters. Accepted procedure in many firms is for media inquiries to be handled only by someone in public relations. No PR person, no matter how skilled, knows your industry as well as you do. Rely on the PR department for guidance, including background information on the reporter and the publication or news program, but not as the only source of industry information. Do the interview yourself.
- Rarely are these interviews confrontational, but they can be challenging – especially if you lack confidence and competence in dealing with the media. Consider attending a media training seminar that gives you on-camera practice in a small-group setting.
- Bring your own agenda to the interview – a few key points you feel should be addressed. If the reporter doesn't raise those points, inject them into the discussion. For example, use the

interview to explain why a price increase was necessary, to alert customers to changing supply conditions, or to educate or mobilize your industry regarding a specific regulatory or legislative development.

Conrad Hilton (of Hilton Hotels) once did a TV interview that ended with the interviewer asking Hilton if he had anything else to say to the viewing audience. Hilton responded, "Yes . . . place the shower curtain **inside** the tub." What important message do you want to convey to your audience?

- Consider not only what you say, but also how you say it. A dull, uninspired recitation of facts is unlikely to engage the reporter's interest. Remember: communication is selling . . . and successful selling is the transfer of enthusiasm from one person to another.
- Recognize that you have options, and exercise some control during the interview. Don't decline an interview because you're concerned about one or two possible questions. If there are some issues you prefer not to discuss, say so. If your time is limited, establish a time limit for the interview. If it's not appropriate to do an "on-the-record" interview (everything you say can be attributed to you or your company), consider these alternatives: a "backgrounder" (you can be quoted directly, but neither you nor your company is identified) or an "off-the-record" interview (you are not quoted or identified in any way).
- Be selective in accepting interview requests. Evaluate each publication in terms of its importance, credibility and circulation. And rather than wait to be contacted, let those publications on your "A" list know you're accessible. (By the way, don't forget the broadcast media.) If necessary, ask your PR department or firm to help facilitate that link. Then keep in touch – just as you would with a

SEE WHO SPEAKS on page 5.

Communicating is selling ... and successful selling is the transfer of enthusiasm from speaker to listener.

Mastering the Remote (Interview)

Watch television news today – network or cable, national or local, newscast or newsmagazine – and chances are you’ll see someone participating in a remote interview, where the interviewer is in one location and the interviewee is in another.

There are a number of reasons for this trend, which is likely to continue.

According to a recent Gallup Poll, Americans consider the electronic media their preferred and most trustworthy source of news. Not surprisingly, the number of electronic news sources continues to grow. Today’s business executive, for example, has many more opportunities to appear on camera than did his counterpart of yesterday. Just consider the proliferation of business and financial programs such as *Squawk Box*, *Power Lunch* and others – all with an insatiable need for spokespersons.

Also, advances in technology have made microwave and satellite feeds more accessible, reliable and affordable.

In today’s highly mobile society, remote interviews allow reporters to link up with the experts, no matter where they are – experts who bring greater credibility, importance and immediacy to the broadcast.

“We’re seeing greater client interest in learning how to become proficient in handling remote interviews,” says Ken Haseley, media relations counselor with The Ammerman Experience. “We incorporate those interviews in many of our media training seminars.”

Any media interview involves a certain degree of risk, and should be approached with caution. However, remote interviews present participants with a unique set of challenges.

Here are some of those challenges . . . and how to deal with them:

An unnatural situation. Doing a remote interview may involve going to a TV studio or some other location. If it’s the former, the studio is probably empty and “cold.” It’s just you and most likely one other person – the camera operator.

Most importantly, the person interviewing you isn’t there, so there’s no human being

to relate to – no face-to-face interaction. All of this is likely to keep you from relaxing or warming up – a difficult thing to do even when the

reporter is there. But in the absence of someone to play off of, it’s really tough.

Suggestions:

- Take a colleague with you in order to “warm up” or humanize the environment.
- If the opportunity presents itself, consider doing the interview from your office or home – a comfortable, familiar, relaxed setting. If that’s not possible, get to the studio early so you can get acclimated to the setting.
- During the interview, you must make a special effort to increase your energy (both vocal and visual), and to communicate with feeling.
- Smile – early and often. Be sure the first thing viewers see is a visage that says, “I’m comfortable and I’m happy to be here.”

Head and shoulders. That’s the camera shot that will be used – how you’ll appear on TV, throughout the entire interview.

Suggestions:

- Sit still. Don’t make any unusual movements.
- Natural gestures are fine, but keep in mind that the audience may not see your hands. So you must use your facial expression and voice (inflection) to communicate energy, enthusiasm and confidence.
- Remain seated at the end of the interview. Don’t bolt out of the chair. You may still be on the air, and you don’t want the audience to think you’re eager to leave.
- Don’t remove your microphone or ear piece; let the technician do that. And don’t get up until you’re told.

Where to look. The rule of thumb when being interviewed is to look at the interviewer, and ignore the camera. For remote interviews, however, the problem with this advice is that the interviewer is elsewhere.

Suggestions:

- In a remote interview, you must master the technique of looking at the camera. It becomes the surrogate interviewer.
- Resist the temptation to look at a human face – the camera operator or anyone else in the room.
- If there’s a monitor in the room (on which the interviewer appears), don’t look at it – even if it’s close to the camera. Indeed, using a monitor usually does more harm than good. Instead, look at the camera and try to visualize the interviewer. (Visualization is a valuable technique to use. Many

athletes visualize a successful performance. This is because the mind doesn’t know the difference between a real and visualized experience.) Allow your mind to believe the camera is actually the interviewer.

- Be careful of

teleprompters, which are usually attached to the camera. If one is there and hasn’t been turned off, you may be able to see yourself in the reflected glass – a real distraction. Ask the technician to turn it off.

- During the interview, consider yourself always “on.” In other words, maintain proper eye contact and demeanor (including facial expression) even when the interviewer or another guest is talking. You could be on camera, even though you are not talking. (There may be an interest in seeing your reaction, or there may simply be a miscue.)

The ear piece. It’s uncomfortable and can create problems (fall out, malfunction, etc.). Have you ever noticed how many interviewees are bothered by the ear

SEE MASTERING on page 6.

Remote interviews present participants with a unique set of challenges.

Remote interviews enable reporters to link up with the experts, who bring greater credibility, importance and immediacy to the broadcast.



AEP: America's Energy Partner™

Case Study: Communicating Sensitive Information to the Public

American Electric Power is a leading supplier of electricity and energy-related services. In the United States, AEP provides electricity to parts of Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Virginia and Tennessee. Companies in many industries, including the electric utility industry, are required to report to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency the specific amounts of certain chemicals they handle or release annually. This report is known as the Toxics Release Inventory, or TRI. AEP is one of the utilities that completes a TRI report for each of its coal-fired power plants and coal-preparation facilities. Because AEP is one of the largest coal-burning electric utilities in the country, the number of pounds of chemicals the company must report is quite high.

Although facilities that must comply with TRI reporting requirements need not communicate their TRI data directly to the general public, AEP chose to do so. Presenting and explaining the company's chemical emissions data was the responsibility of a number of AEP employees from various locations. To prepare them to do that, The Ammerman Experience conducted a series of training sessions, providing instruction on how to establish trust and credibility when communicating about health, safety and environmental issues. During that training, each participant also took part in three videotaped and critiqued exercises: delivering a segment of a scripted presentation, answering questions based on that presentation (including facing a skeptical/hostile audience), and handling one-on-one interactions with the audience. Training was customized with the assistance of AEP staff working on this project before and during the sessions.

Paul Loeffelman, AEP's manager of external and environmental affairs, spoke with *Advisor* about his company's innovative communications and outreach project.

Q. Why the decision to go public with your TRI numbers?

A. We realize the public is interested in, and concerned about, the environment. We share that interest and concern, and

believe it's appropriate to identify our TRI numbers and explain the actual risk posed by those emissions. Sharing this data gives us an opportunity to provide a context that otherwise probably would not reach the public.

Q. Successful communication programs result from asking and answering two questions: *What is your message?* and *Who is your audience?* How did AEP answer those questions?

A. We had several sequential key messages. First, we acknowledged that we do have emissions from burning coal, and that we're concerned about those emissions. Also that we try to minimize them through efficient plant operations, and conduct and support research that helps develop new technologies to further reduce those emissions. We wanted to communicate that we rely on regulatory agencies to establish the regulations that are designed to protect public health and the environment with an extra margin of safety. It was also important to remind people that coal is an important fuel in generating electricity, and that AEP is dedicated to supplying affordable, reliable electricity. We conveyed our willingness to answer anyone's questions about our emissions to the best of our ability.

Q. And your audiences?

A. Most importantly, our employees. We wanted all employees to be able to talk to their neighbors and families about this issue – to explain why we have emissions, and convey EPA's conclusions regarding the general low risk they impose. Other audiences were policy makers (at the federal, state and local level), fence line communities, financial analysts, shareholders, the media and community health care professionals.

Q. Turning to tactics, what communications tools did you use?

A. The centerpiece is a TRI brochure, available in hard copy and on our web site. It contained charts showing actual numbers for each chemical, from each plant, and profiles of these chemicals and their potential risks in lay terms. We

also widely publicized the phone number of Dr. John Graham, a medical expert from the Harvard Center for Risk Analysis. He was available to answer questions from anyone. And an article he authored on an analysis of the risks posed by power plants was posted on our web site. Other tools included our environmental performance report and a video on the various fuels used to produce electricity. We also issued press releases and developed links from our web site to web sites of organizations such as the Electric Power Research Institute.

For employees who had specific communications responsibilities, we provided a list of frequently asked questions, an Ammerman Experience booklet on risk communication, and of course the Ammerman training.

Q. Specifically, which employees participated in this effort?

A. We wanted all employees to participate. But plant managers and other employees at the local level played an especially important role. Prior to our public release of data on June 4, these employees, as members of their communities, went out sharing information, answering questions, addressing concerns, inviting the community to visit their plants. These face-to-face communications were very important. Other employees who played a major role were those in shareholder relations, our call center, and corporate communications.

Q. What were some of the more challenging aspects of this project?

A. Preparing employees in our engineering-oriented culture to communicate effectively in an environment of high concern and low trust. We knew that our communications shouldn't focus just on the science, although it was generally favorable. We needed to be sensitive to the emotion surrounding this issue, and to communicate empathy to our stakeholders.

Q. What were several of the public's most frequently asked questions?

SEE CASE STUDY on page 7.

The Ammerman Experience Introduces New Seminars

The Ammerman Experience is offering two new seminars:

Effective Media Communications for Marketing Professionals creates and cultivates media-savvy and media-friendly management. The seminar prepares marketing and sales professionals; executives; and marcom, investor relations and other business professionals to respond to, or seek out, media opportunities that will help promote their company – its products, services or industry.

According to Ammerman Experience Vice President Teresa Saylor, “Establishing a dialogue with trade press and other business reporters is an investment – one that can deliver results at lower cost and with greater credibility than advertising or other forms of sales promotion. Yet, for many marketing and other business professionals, avoiding the media is common practice – primarily because of fear and uncertainty about talking to reporters.”

Says Saylor, “In many organizations, media training is routinely provided to those who have responsibility to communicate during a crisis. However, marketing professionals are usually overlooked. Yet, these are the very individuals frequently sought out by the trade media. And while these interviews are rarely confrontational or unpleasant, they can be challenging or even difficult. Business reporters can, and do, ask difficult questions, which, if handled incorrectly, can have a damaging effect on a company.”

Saylor points out that media relations are an integral part of a complete and successful marketing communications plan. This unique seminar equips spokespersons with the confidence and competence needed for a successful encounter with the media in non-crisis situations, such as with new product launches, as well as with routine media inquiries and opportunities.

In addition to providing participants with extensive on-camera practice, the seminar explores a variety of topics.

Among them:

- Different types of interviews (e.g., on-the-record, off-the-record, background);
- How to use media interviews as a way to obtain information;
- Legal and business issues that warrant consideration (e.g., avoiding the disclosure of material information);
- Potential problems encountered during and after an interview, and how to prevent/correct them;
- How to conduct an editorial briefing.

Advanced Media Skills for Communications Professionals provides experienced communicators with a state-of-the-art briefing on recent and imminent developments in news gathering and reporting techniques, and explores how those changes impact the development, delivery and reception of a spokesperson’s key messages.

“Shrinking soundbites, the ‘tabloidization’ of mainstream news, remote TV interviews, the Internet and interactive TV are just a few of the developments affecting an organization’s media relations efforts,” says Jeff Braun, general manager for The Ammerman Experience. “Few communications professionals have the time or inclination to keep up with all these developments, or analyze their impact on day-to-day media relations. However, as media skills development experts, we do. So we’ve put together a comprehensive, but tightly focused, briefing for corporate and agency communications professionals who either serve as spokespersons or advise others who do.”

The two-day seminar covers the following topics:

- The news media today: an in-depth look at current developments, including the convergence of tabloid and traditional reporting, and the aggressive use of technology such as remote TV interviews, the Internet and interactive TV.
- Message development: crafting and communicating impactful messages that appeal to today’s journalists, and

capture audience attention.

- Anatomy of a crisis: the changing nature of today’s crises and the predictable stages of every crisis.
- Establishing trust and credibility: why this must be the overriding goal of any communications strategy, and how to do so.
- Creating and cultivating media-friendly and media-savvy management: how to help business professionals overcome their fear of, or resistance to, the media.
- Media traps: the nine most common mistakes made by those who talk to reporters.

As with all Ammerman Experience seminars, this seminar is interactive, affording each participant extensive on-camera experience.

Clients who book a private session will be able to structure the seminar to meet the specific needs of their communications professionals. For example, modules on the various topics can be selected and then customized in terms of content, length and degree of interactivity.

Public and private sessions alike provide those who attend with a challenging and rewarding professional growth experience.

For detailed information about these two new seminars, contact The Ammerman Experience (1-800-866-2026).

..... **WHO SPEAKS - Continued from page 2.**

customer. Have lunch with the reporter. Seek him out at a trade show. And be alert to assignment changes at the publication.

Establishing a dialogue with reporters who cover your industry is an investment – one that can deliver results at lower cost and with greater credibility than advertising and other forms of sales promotion. Media-savvy managers recognize this and use the media as an integral part of their marketing communications strategy. 

In Brief

Another Reason to Gesture

Using appropriate gestures can help you relax and appear more comfortable when speaking in public. That's a given. But gesturing while you speak also can improve your brain's recall ability, according to a recently published study by

Donna Frick Horbury, a professor of psychology at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina.

Have you ever gestured intensely, trying to find an elusive word and suddenly had it pop into your head? Robert Krauss, a psychology professor at Columbia University, can't say how or why this happens, but he and other researchers speculate that in forming memories, sights, sounds and smells can help fix a word or image in our mind.

Professor Horbury found that preventing subjects from gesturing in tip-of-the-tongue situations reduced their chances of recalling what they wanted to say.

Communicating TRI Data: Guidelines for Success

Several industrial sectors have been added to the list of facilities that must report releases of toxic chemicals to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and state governments. Among those sectors are metal and coal mining, petroleum and chemical distributors, and certain electricity generating facilities.

Forward-thinking industries, companies and facilities that must comply with TRI (Toxics Release Inventory) reporting requirements have found that it makes sense to expand their TRI communications efforts beyond EPA – to the general public, including the media. Doing so gives them an opportunity to help shape the message that reaches the public.

Guidelines for successfully communicating TRI data to the public can be found in the Summer 1999 issue of *Environmental Regulation and Permitting*. A free reprint of the article

is available through The Ammerman Experience (1-800-866-2026). *To learn*

how one leading electric utility met the challenge of explaining its TRI data to the public, read the case study on page 4 of this newsletter.

Using appropriate gestures can help you relax and appear more comfortable when speaking in public.

Qualities That Count

A recent U.S. Census Bureau survey included this question: "When you consider hiring a new non-supervisory or production worker, how important are the following in your decision to hire?"

The results (ranked on a scale of 1 through 5, with 1 being not important or not considered, and 5 being very important):


Attitude	4.6
Communication skills	4.2
Previous work experience	4.0
Recommendations from current employers	3.4
Recommendations from previous employers	3.4
Industry-based credentials certifying skills	3.2
Years of schooling completed	2.9
Scores on tests administered as part of interviews	2.5
Academic performance	2.5
Experience or reputation of applicant's school	2.4
Teacher recommendations	2.1

Sharing Worst-Case Scenarios with the Public

Facilities that handle certain chemicals were required to develop a risk management plan and submit a summary of that plan to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency by June 1999. On August 5, 1999, President Clinton signed legislation that establishes new provisions regarding those plans.

One of those provisions requires every covered facility to hold a public meeting by February 2, 2000, to share information about the local implications of its risk management plan, including a summary of the off-site consequence analysis portion of its plan. Facilities must certify to the FBI by June 5, 2000 that they have held a meeting within one year before, or six months after, August 5, 1999. Additional


information about this new law is available at www.epa.gov/ceppo.

In the booklet, *Communicating Worst-Case Scenarios: Guidelines for Success*, The Ammerman Experience provides suggestions on what to do before and after sharing a risk management plan with the public. The booklet also offers suggestions on how to establish trust and credibility when communicating with the public about health, safety and environmental issues, and how to deal effectively with the news media. Another section of the booklet identifies what communications lessons have been learned from companies that have already communicated their worst-case scenarios publicly. The booklet is available at no cost from The Ammerman Experience (1-800-866-2026). 

MASTERING - Continued from page 3.

piece during a remote interview?

Suggestions:

- Be sure to have the technician test the volume level before the interview begins. If it's too loud or soft, say so.
- To minimize the chances of having it fall out of your ear, have the technician tape the wire to the back of your collar.
- If you frequently participate in remote interviews, consider purchasing your own ear piece. Customized ear pieces are developed by using a mold taken from your ear. They fit better and are less obtrusive – almost invisible. Go to a shop that sells hearing aids to get one.
- If excessive noise is coming from your ear piece, take it out of your ear. Then tell the interviewer what happened, but finish making your point. Likewise, if you lose audio, continue to talk. Such an experience can be a blessing in disguise – it can give you an opportunity to bridge to a point you'd like to make. For example, say something like this: "Bill, we seem to have lost our audio, but an important point to mention about the issue we've been discussing is..." 

CASE STUDY - Continued from page 4.

A. Why didn't you tell us before about these chemicals? What are the health effects of each of the chemicals on the list? And why hadn't AEP or the electric industry done any research to see what these chemicals do to people who breathe them? (Incidentally, our answer to this last question was that a lot of research had been done – by AEP and the industry – and much of it was used by the U.S. EPA in developing its risk assessment.)


Q. What didn't you anticipate? Any surprises?

A. We didn't realize that following our communication and outreach plan as outlined would be as effective as it was. Instead of getting very negative reactions, as we anticipated, the overall reaction from our audiences was neutral to mildly favorable. There were very few surprises. And that was in large part because of the training The Ammerman Experience provided, and the two years we spent in our planning process.

Q. What advice would you offer to others who plan to share TRI data or other sensitive information?

A. Start early in the communications/outreach process. That's very important. Also, candidly explain why these chemicals are released, what the health experts say about them, and what you're going to do to reduce them. Take as much time as is necessary to communicate with your stakeholders. And give them time to understand what you're saying. Success comes through establishing two-way communication, not with sound bites.

For AEP, there was no question that forming the right team and having that team coordinate its effort with the company's business units made a huge difference in our effectiveness. A team effort is very important; we had a core team of specialists: in power generation, environmental affairs and corporate communications.

For more information about AEP's communications and outreach project, contact Paul Loeffelman directly at phloeffelman@aep.com, 614-223-1243, or visit the company's web site at www.aep.com. 

What's Your CQ? (Communications Quotient)

A Quick Quiz from The Ammerman Experience

The ability to communicate effectively is ranked the number one key to success by leaders in business, government and the professions. It can sell a point of view, gain media attention, win over a skeptical or hostile audience, make a sale, or enhance a career.

The Ammerman Experience is a pioneer in exploring the link between effective communication and professional success. What we've learned and what we teach can help you master the communication skills that have a direct bearing on your ability to reach and influence others.

How much do you really know about communicating effectively? Take the following quiz to find out. Answers are on page 8.

1. A spoken message has three components: verbal (the words you use to express your ideas), vocal (how you sound) and visual (what people see). Approximately what percent does the verbal component contribute to the speaker's believability?
 - A. Less than 10%
 - B. 30%
 - C. 50%
 - D. More than 90%
2. Eye contact is critical in both one-on-one and group communication situations. What is the optimum length of time to maintain eye contact?
 - A. 1-2 seconds
 - B. 5-10 seconds
 - C. 30 seconds
 - D. 1 minute or more
3. After listening to a 10-minute oral presentation, the average listener has heard, understood, accurately evaluated, and retained about ___% of what was said.
 - A. 10%
 - B. 25%
 - C. 50%
 - D. 90%
4. Visual aids are generally ineffective tools in business and sales presentations.

True False
5. People begin to make up their minds about others within _____ of first meeting them.
 - A. 10 seconds
 - B. 30 seconds
 - C. 1 minute
 - D. 20 minutes
6. Americans frequently identify public speaking as one of their greatest fears. The best protection against nervousness is:
 - A. To rely on drugs or alcohol to calm your nerves
 - B. To tell the audience you are uncomfortable speaking before groups
 - C. To memorize your presentation
 - D. To know your subject matter cold
7. In business presentations, it is best to:
 - A. Tell a joke to break the ice
 - B. Use humorous stories or anecdotes that tie in to your message, or are relevant to the situation
 - C. Either of the above
 - D. Avoid humor altogether
8. When making a business presentation to a group of people, you should:
 - A. Let your eyes sweep across the audience from side to side
 - B. Look at one person long enough to deliver one complete thought, then move to another individual and repeat the process
 - C. Focus your eyes and voice on people sitting in the back row
 - D. Make contact with faces rather than eyes
9. Of the following characteristics that make someone credible, which account for half of a person's credibility, and are assessed in the first 30 seconds:
 - A. Empathy/Caring
 - B. Competence/Expertise
 - C. Honesty/Openness
 - D. Commitment/Dedication
10. When delivering a presentation, the average speaker needs to increase his or her energy level approximately ___%.
 - A. 10%
 - B. 25%
 - C. 50%
 - D. 75%
11. There is a scientifically tested formula for success in persuasion.

True False
12. Who among the following public figures is the least effective communicator?
 - A. John Madden (FOX sports commentator)
 - B. Dan Rather (CBS news anchor)
 - C. Oprah Winfrey (TV talk show host)
 - D. Matt Lauer (Today show co-host)
 - E. Katie Couric (Today show co-host)

SEE ANSWERS on page 8.

What's Your CQ? Answers.

1.(A) Most people concentrate only on the verbal element, assuming this to be the most important component. But research by Professor Albert Mehrabian of UCLA shows otherwise. The vocal and visual elements account for 38% and 55% respectively of believability, while the verbal element accounts for a mere 7%.

2.(B) When you maintain eye contact for just 1-2 seconds, your eyes are darting, a habit that undermines credibility. Eye contact that exceeds 10 seconds will be interpreted as intimacy or intimidation.

3.(C) In addition, according to Dr. Lyman K. Steil of the University of Minnesota, within 48 hours, that 50% drops another half to a 25% effectiveness level. By the end of a week, that level goes down to about 10% or less.

4.(False) Studies show retention increases when listeners see as well as hear. In addition, when visuals are used: a speaker's goals are met and group consensus occurs more often, and the time required to present a concept can be reduced.

5.(A) Research shows that we start to make up our minds about other people within 7 seconds of meeting them. Much of this is non-verbal as we communicate through body language (e.g., posture, gestures, facial expression). Impressions made in the first few seconds are so powerful that it takes another 4 minutes to add 50% more impression – positive or negative – to that communication.

6.(D) Knowing your material increases confidence, which affects performance. Drugs or alcohol may result in slowed reaction time, slurred speech and hazy memory. If you announce that you are nervous, your audience starts to worry about you; presenters who cause worry don't inspire confidence. Memorizing a speech is a formula for disaster.

7.(B) The use of humor is one of several ways to help you connect with your audience. Telling jokes, however, is risky; they can offend people. The audience may have already heard them. And they are difficult to deliver (well). Leave joke telling to professional comedians.

8.(B) This is the only foolproof way to keep the listener's attention. It also aids in your thinking ability.

9.(A) The other 3 characteristics contribute equally to the remaining 50%. According to Focus Group's Susan Santos, as speakers, women are automatically perceived to have a high degree of caring/empathy. However, they need to do a better job of projecting competence/expertise. When men can communicate caring/empathy, however, they do a better job as speakers than women do.

10.(C) A high energy level is critical to success in public speaking. Communicating is selling; and successful selling involves the transfer of energy and enthusiasm from speaker to listener. (Have you ever known an effective salesperson who was not enthusiastic?)

11. (True) Some years ago, Xerox commissioned a team of university-accredited behavioral scientists to determine what skills consistently led to success in persuasion. The study established that the following 6 skills met the tests of science:

- Make an initial benefit statement
- Ask questions
- Support the other person
- Ask for what you want
- Overcome objections
- Ask for what you want again


12 (B) There's very little emotional connection between Dan Rather and the viewer. He frequently appears distant and aloof.

Scoreboard – How to determine your CQ:

11-12 correct answers: Touchdown. If you're not already an outstanding communicator, you definitely have the potential to become one.

8-10 correct answers: Field Goal. You probably know more about effective communication than most people do.

5-7 correct answers: First down. A solid accomplishment, but wouldn't you prefer to get some points on the board?

0-4 correct answers: Fumble. Contact The Ammerman Experience immediately for coaching. 

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