

CHALLENGE

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A Herff Jones Impact Resource For Students

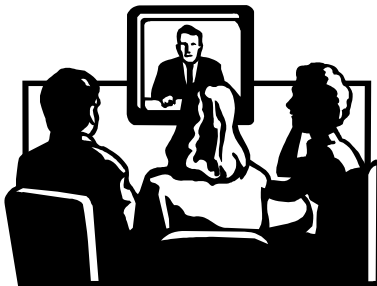
June, 2003

JUNE CHALLENGE:

Public Relations

Many student activity projects are not successful for the simple reason that there is not enough publicity about the activity. Public relations for any activity is necessary! It can be the greatest event on paper but if no one knows about it, how will it succeed? It does not matter whether your intended audience is the general public, your school, parents, or classmates; they cannot be a part of the activity if they do not know about it.

Publicity is a powerful tool for those who learn to use it effectively. It is a method of disseminating information to attract public interest. Public relations is simply telling people something favorable, such as what you do well.



First, determine what you want to promote such as an event or fundraising activity. Ask the following questions:

1. Who is the target audience?
2. What are the goals and objectives?
3. Is the time and message right?
4. What are my resources (time and money)?
5. What are the strategies?

The following are key factors for successful publicity results:

- ❖ Personal energy- Enthusiasm is always useful but especially in generating publicity.
- ❖ Writing ability- Successful publicity requires good writing.
- ❖ Verbal ability- The best verbal approach is a person who can relate ideas clearly.
- ❖ Organization- A well organized person can save time and energy.

Contacts are one of the keys to successful publicity. Also knowing how to approach the media in a professional manner. Part of this involves knowing who to approach and how. Compile and keep a list of local media. Update this list regularly.

The press release is the primary tool of public relations. A well-done press release is essentially a brief article designed to stimulate media coverage. It should be written in the style of a news story. Make sure that it answers the following - Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

The press release should be presented cleanly and clearly, double spaced, and on non-fancy paper. Keep your press release to one or two pages. If you have more questions, ask your journalism teacher or go to the Media Center for books on journalism and newspaper writing.

Today it is even more important to generate good publicity for your projects and your school. It is a great feeling when your project has a positive impact on the community and school.

Remember it takes work but good public relations are essential for a worthwhile student activity program.

This newsletter is a joint effort of Jackie Burch and Herff Jones, Inc.

HANDLING FIRST TIME JITTERS WHEN PLANNING A PROJECT OR EVENT

You have just been named chair of one of your school's biggest events. This is a major honor but lots of work. You have never planned an event! What do you do? The weight of inexperience, the desire to do a perfect job and the unforgiving high profile event all contribute to stress. Emotions can include fear and joy, inspiration and exasperation, and many others that can be experienced in a single day.



In the weeks before the event or project:

- **Think positive.** Feeling positive helps to eliminate a lot of stress. Be as prepared as possible and some of the worry will be eliminated.
- **Write it down.** Make lots and lots of lists: checklists, task lists, and what can go wrong lists. Anticipate worst case scenarios and have a written complete contingency plan.



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- **Find a mentor.** Reach out to someone, your adviser or another student, who can guide you through your panic attacks and teach you to solve problems before they arise as well as just listen to you.

During the event/project:

- **Be comfortable.** Wear really comfortable shoes and clothes. Remember you may have to crawl under the registration table to hunt something.
- **Have a backup.** Have one other person who knows everything you know. Make sure they also have a binder with all of the important information. This person can take over if you are pulled away to put out a "fire".
- **Keep breakdowns private.** NEVER let them see you sweat or cry. Be sure to have a secret hideout for a brief explosion or implosion.

When the event/project is complete and is being wrapped up:

- **Don't rush things.** Don't make people feel that they have to leave because you want to start the cleanup process.
- **Keep smiling.** Don't lose your "game" face or start complaining aloud until the last person is gone.
- **Tie up loose ends.** Hold an evaluation session. This is essential even with a successful event/project. It helps to plan for future changes to make it even better. Write thank you notes.
- **End on a high note.** Celebrations are important. The entire team should enjoy this time. Emphasize the things that went right. Brainstorm for the future.
- **Last but not least- relax !**

LAUGH OUT LOUD



Life got you down. Worried? Wondering why laughing is worth the bother? Wonder no

more. Here is what laughing does.

- ◆ Aerobic workout for heart and lungs
- ◆ Decreases the negative effects of stress
- ◆ Boosts the immune system
- ◆ Improves digestion
- ◆ Stabilizes mood
- ◆ Inspires creativity
- ◆ Rests the brain
- ◆ Enhances communication
- ◆ May enhance romance
- ◆ A sense of humor is the most desirable trait in a mate.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"So many tangles in life are ultimately hopeless that we have no appropriate sword other than laughter."

~ Gordon W. Allport