

Hello everyone and welcome.
Please feel free to forward this
newsletter to friends and colleagues.

Occasionally, some of the sites I link to ask that you register to access their information. It's always free, it only takes a moment and it is well worth your effort, so please give them a bit of your time and they'll repay it handsomely in easily accessible and valuable information.

Always keep in mind that everything you're exposed to in media is just someone else's interpretation of issues and events, so always view it with an open mind. Skillful communication with media and during presentations can make all the difference in how your messages are reported and received. It's a complicated mix of delivery and interpretation and a skill few master, but something anyone can learn or improve upon.

Here's a list of issues covered in this newsletter . . . enjoy

Smooth Talkers

NEW Coaching Program for Managers and Jr. Executives
Boston Red Sox Players Go To Media School
Martha Stewart's PR Recipe for Damage Control
Grassroots Journalism on the Anti-War Front
Please Accept My Most Humble Apology
BLOGS Make Headlines Again
Who Needs Journalists?
WOW – Wisdom Opportunity Wealth for Women – SOLD OUT!
Media Eats Its Young
Media Monopoly Affects Your Business
If You Don't Like the News, Go Out and Make Some Yourself
Friday Afternoon Link – Urban Legends

Calendar Update

I'm speaking along with Ontario Premier Ernie Eves and Jan Arden at the TOGETHER WE CARE Long Term Care and Retirement Communities Convention & Trade Show on March 3 at the Toronto Convention Centre.

My presence as a speaker at the convention is ironic. Many years ago as a journalist I investigated the nursing home industry across Ontario. My investigation contributed to the closure of one home in downtown Toronto and led to amendments of the Ontario Nursing Home Act.

Click here to find out more about the OLTCA convention . . .
<http://www.oltca.com/>

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Quantum Speak Breakthrough is a one-day program geared for busy professionals who need to quickly bring themselves up to speed regarding Public Speaking. After one intense day of training you'll be better able to

deliver any message to any audience knowing that you are being heard, whether in boardroom meetings or presentations.

Click for more info or to register . . .
<http://www.jeffansell.com/conference04112001.htm>

The annual Dealing With An Angry Public Harvard Law School workshop is slated for May 15 & 16. The conference in Cambridge Massachusetts provides strategies for resolving conflicts and disputes with dissatisfied customers, potential litigants and concerned interest groups.

Part of my agenda explores how to get messages out effectively when dealing with the media and interest groups, especially in controversial situations. Hope to see you there . . .

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<http://pon.execseminars.com/ap/faculty.html>

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SMOOTH TALKERS ____

I was recently interviewed and featured in a cover article entitled "Smooth Talkers" for the Toronto Globe and Mail Careers section. I'd like to share it with you because it addresses a number of issues many people overlook.

The Globe and Mail's Justin Smallbridge wrote the article and opened it with the following statement . . .

" Media savvy used to be the preserve of relatively few people in most companies. The public relations department knew how to handle reporters, the chief executive officer may have been frequently called on to be a company's public face, and that was about it.

Now however, more companies expect everybody in the outfit to effectively get through an encounter with a reporter."

Mr. Smallbridge couldn't have stated it more clearly. Unfortunately too many companies still risk harming their reputations and share prices by communicating unprofessionally with media. If you doubt this for even a second consider the Martha Stewart insider trading scandal that wreaked havoc on the share prices of her company Omnimedia. The last I heard share prices suffered a whopping 50% decline for what almost all media professionals attribute in large part to poor media communication skills.

Granted, no matter what Martha did or said, share prices would have been negatively impacted, but every representative of a company especially its officers have a responsibility to mitigate damage, not exacerbate it. Martha was interviewed on her own turf and had ample opportunity to tell her side of the story, but as many of you know, she chose instead to chop cabbage

and mock the securities commission. A woman whom we all thought was irreproachable is now paying a severe price for failing to recognize and handle a crisis situation properly. It matters not that she is innocent or guilty. The public has voted. The best she can do now is preserve the faith her core fans have demonstrated and rebuild her reputation as she explores new business opportunities.

The Globe and Mail article "Smooth Talkers" covers a number of issues and is good place to learn about professional media training.

You can read the whole story here at The Globe and Mail . . .
<http://www.jeffansell.com/Newsletter/BUMP01Feb2003.htm>

Or click here to view it on my Web site . . .
<http://www.jeffansell.com/GlobeCareers2003.htm>

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NEW COACHING PROGRAM FOR MANAGERS & JR. EXECUTIVES

The QUANTUM SPEAK Presenter

We've launched a new service for up-and-coming executives in need of highly focused training regarding speaking and presentation skills.

The Quantum Speak Presenter is a 2.5 hour coaching session designed for managers who are increasingly called upon to give critical presentations to varied audiences in boardrooms and also larger forums.

Shoana Martin, who has worked closely with me for the last three years, is directing The Quantum Speak Presenter. Shoana has an Honors Degree in Drama in Education. She designs and teaches our workshops.

Shoana has a warm demeanor and is direct in her approach. She also has a keen eye to identify what clients need to further strengthen their communications skills and knows first hand how to inspire people to achieve top performance in highly stressful situations.

For more information please click here . . .
<http://www.jeffansell.com/newsansell.htm - QSPresenter>

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BOSTON RED SOX PLAYERS GO TO MEDIA SCHOOL

Late great baseball legend Ted Williams had a love-hate relationship with media, so much so that he coined the acrimonious phrase "Knights of the Keyboards" in reference to sports writers who reported on his career.

Recently, the Red Sox have become so frustrated with media that they decided to send the team to Media School. Good idea, but what took them so long? It's no secret that athletes often have a hard time verbalizing their thoughts, especially when frustrated and under pressure.

Who doesn't? What we say and what we mean is often quite far apart.

Granted, some athletes do have a seemingly natural talent in front of the camera, take Gretzky for instance, but the sad truth is that many people speak emotionally instead of intellectually. Make no mistake, players like Gretzky are media coached and trained throughout their careers to get their point across clearly so that they look and sound intelligent.

If sports celebrities get it, why is it so hard for executives and managerial representatives of more traditional companies who also rely on sterling reputations to get with the program? One of the reasons is that change is difficult. Unfortunately, like many things you have to suffer catastrophic loss before you decide to do something about it. Keep in mind that your company may be able to absorb the loss, but guaranteed it will be at the detriment of your career.

When the Red Sox recently decided it was time to make a few changes they didn't fool around. Media School became mandatory for all members of the team. I'm not surprised they are taking a communal mentality and coaching the players as a team, but what perplexes me is why many organizations still seem unwilling to admit they need help. Can you imagine a baseball team without a batting coach?

Media is a language. If you don't learn to speak the language how can you be expected to communicate intelligently? Something also worthy of consideration is that media is becoming polarized. On one hand we have a small handful of companies buying up community newspapers, TV and radio stations, and on the other side thanks to the Internet media is becoming fractured and diluted. Everyone today also has 24/7 access. Bad quotes live online forever.

Ten years ago, unless you were an historic figure, quotes faded when you threw the newspaper out at the end of the day or after the eleven o'clock news. Today all you have to do is go to Google.com and search for "quotes Wayne Gretzky" and a long list comes up in a matter of seconds. You can run, but you can't hide.

It seems Red Sox Manager Grady Little could use a little media coaching himself. He started the inaugural Media School class with the following admonishment to his players. He said, "What's said in here stays in here." Ironically a news television camera was rolling at the back of the class.

The cat's out of the bag Mr. Little.

Media coaching has gone mainstream.

We have no secrets here.

Just solid coaching strategy backed up with experience.

Read more here about the Red Sox Media School . . .
<http://www.jeffansell.com/Newsletter/BUMP07Feb2003.htm>

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MARTHA STEWART'S PR RECIPE FOR DAMAGE CONTROL

Ms. Stewart quickly realized that unless she changed her attitude and media strategy, the IMClone controversy, which was escalating out of control could get much worse. She recently launched a number of operational/PR tactics to lessen the impact on share prices.

For example, her image is no longer used in some television advertisements (only her voice) and she has launched a new magazine without her well branded girl-next-door trademark smile, in fact she is nowhere to be seen as a spokesperson. These carefully engineered steps were taken to keep both her business interests moving forward and to calm the waters. She knows that in order to recover she has no choice but to manage the crisis with a more thoughtful and panoramic approach. The new strategies seem to be working.

Martha's New Magazine Gets Flock of Advertisers - Wall Street Journal
http://online.wsj.com/article_email/0,,SB1041545723820445993,00.html

Martha Stewart Omnimedia Current Business Stats - Fans lend support
<http://www.jeffansell.com/Newsletter/BUIMP02Feb2003.htm>

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GRASSROOTS JOURNALISM ON THE ANTI-WAR FRONT

Grab your bullet-proof vest, cell phone and digital camera and join the ranks of a new wave of journalism. The BBC website is offering anyone the chance to become bona-fide reporters at anti-war demonstrations. They want the perspective of the person on the street.

<http://www.europemedia.net/shownews.asp?ArticleID=14916>

How does this change journalism? Will these people be taken seriously? You may be surprised. Take a look at the BBC link below to see what the average person on the street has to contribute to a public forum . . .

BBC1
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/talking_point/2742687.stm

Paul Krugman, a columnist with the NY Times recently wrote an article entitled "The Great Divide." In it he explores why France and the U.S are at such odds. He attributes it in part to the fact that each country sees different news. If news is supposed to be unbiased how could this be possible? Aren't the facts the facts?

Read more here at the NY Times . . .
<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/02/18/opinion/18KRUG.html?th>

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PLEASE ACCEPT MY MOST HUMBLE APOLOGY

These have to be the six hardest words to pass over your lips.
Usually mumbled right after, "I'm Sorry."

Why does it cause so much consternation? Ironically, more often than not it will give you the best results, but cause you the most emotional grief.

Why is asking for forgiveness so hard? Is it because it exposes vulnerability? Does it make us look weak?

On the contrary, apologizing makes you look strong.

You screwed up! Admit it. Genuinely admit it and move on.
I am human. You are human. Humans make mistakes.
I made a mistake. Please accept my most humble apology.

Easy to plan, but hard to do because the key is making it genuine.

Genuine is important because if you come across as insincere you will actually make the situation worse. Not only are you admitting you made a mistake, but by coming across as insincere you demonstrate disrespect for the recipient's intellect.

Here's the problem. Apologizing wreaks havoc with your physiology. You perspire, your mouth gets dry and even worse you can't breathe. Is this any way to come across as genuine? Not a chance, instead you look nervous and send a message you have something to hide. You can thank your parents for this physiological paradox.

As children most of us learned that the outcome for doing something wrong and then admitting guilt would be punishment –

Go to your room.
No TV.
Give the cat a bath.
Ouch!

Is it any wonder we can't easily admit responsibility?

Is there a way to modify your behavior? With a little training you can learn to communicate a sincere message using your body, tone and words.

The first step is breathing. Most people under stressful conditions hold their breath. They actually deprive their brain of oxygen. Hmmm. They hold their breath as a reflex because it might be the last one they take if anything goes wrong. Fight or flight syndrome. Are you starting to see that this goes way, way back, even before your parents? Mom and dad may have simply made it worse. The reflex is a genetically inherent, unconscious survival response. Learning to make a sincere apology in public is like trying to apologize to the Saber tooth tiger for stepping on his tail. It can be done, but you need a plan and you have to practice. Don't even think of running.

I recently read something interesting in Time magazine written by the director of Columbia Presbyterian's Heart Institute, Dr. Mehmet Oz . . .

Dr. Oz, a cardiovascular surgeon, teaches a simple technique to his patients to help them relax and breath easier. It aids in post surgery recovery. The process is meditation. He teaches his patients to control unconscious functions at a molecular level. (Breathing, temperature control, etc.) It's similar to Yoga. Basically his patients learn to be aware of and control the message their brain is sending to their body.

The bottom line is that it reduces stress. Apologizing causes stress.

I also teach my clients to control stress. We talk about and analyze breathing techniques. We also train individually or in groups and then practice in an environment that simulates real world situations. It works.

If you have Real Video capabilities click here for a short video on controlled breathing . . . <http://www.jeffansell.com/Real/breathe.ram>

Interested in a little more info about apologizing? Click the link below. You will have to register if you haven't already, but it's free and worth it. <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/articles.cfm?articleid=680&catid=11>

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BLOGS MAKE HEADLINES AGAIN

Excerpt from Wired News . . .

"It's safe to assume that, before he flushed his reputation down the toilet, Trent Lott had absolutely no idea what a blog was.

He may have a clue now. Internet opinion pages like Instapundit, run by University of Tennessee law professor Glenn Reynolds, and Talking Points Memo, from leftie political columnist Josh Marshall -- were among the first to latch on to ABCNews.com's brief item on Lott's racist comments during Strom Thurmond's 100th birthday bash.

And they kept focusing on Lott's hateful past -- until the national press corps finally had to take notice."

The face of journalism is changing. Even the best of the best are having a hard time keeping up. What makes you think you're so different? If you're charged with delivering messages on behalf of your company it makes good sense to learn and prepare as much as you can about the psychological and mechanical workings of media.

Read about the whole Trent Lott BLOG fiasco here . . . <http://www.wired.com/news/culture/0,1284,56978,00.html>

BTW, GOOGLE just bought Blogger.com, the largest blogging company in the world! This will have tremendous impact on the 200,000+ active users that currently use Blogger.com for personal journalism.

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ART OF WOW --- FOR WOMEN ONLY _____

MAY 2003 Art of WOW Conference is SOLD OUT!

Roz Usheroff (www.Usheroff.com) and I are having a wonderful time delivering the Art of WOW programs!

WOW stands for "Wisdom, Opportunity & Wealth" and is a communications and leadership conference for professional women

Art of WOW helps women executives project stronger leadership and confidence, especially when they have to speak under fire. The conference is a great way to support female leadership in your organization!

Last year Roz and I hosted Art of WOW programs at Chicago's Sutton Place and Toronto's Four Season's hotels. I'm grateful to say the conferences are a great success. Our next conference is in May, but unfortunately for anyone who hasn't yet reserved space, it is sold out.

You may be glad to know though that the next Art of WOW Conference is scheduled for September 24 & 25, 2003.

If you're interested in attending, please avoid disappointment and contact Marilo at your first convenience. 416 413 9660.

We look forward to seeing you there.

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WHO NEEDS JOURNALISTS?

From LA Weekly . . .

"The fact is that truly independent coverage of Big Media is disappearing right before our eyes. As for what's left, we can no longer trust our sight. Given the recent layoffs at Reuters, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Business Week* and *Forbes*, the pool of independent business reporters grows smaller by the day. Then there's all that cross-fertilization, whereby print reporters pocket appearance fees or even fat contracts from, say, CNBC. (Interesting that it wasn't those news outlets but Jack Welch's second wife who informed parent company GE's shareholders about his company-paid retirement perks.)"

Statements like the above from LA Weekly are truly disturbing. Shrinking diversification of media is a serious problem facing the entire world. If only one or two companies own the communication pipeline how biased do you think the story about your company will be? It is quickly growing more important than ever to make sure the message you send to the press is delivered in a manner that imparts absolutely no ambiguous meaning.

Read the whole story from LA Weekly here . . .

<http://www.laweekly.com/ink/03/01/deadline-finke.php>

In 1996, the two largest radio chains in the United States owned 115 stations; today, those two chains own more than 1,400 stations. Indie Radio station owners have plummeted to a third. Read more here . . .
<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/01/20/opinion/20SAFI.html?todayshadlines>

Al Neuharth -- the founder of USA Today, best-selling author, and former chairman and CEO of Gannett Co. Inc. -- discussed media issues Thursday in a talk at Rochester Institute of Technology.

He said in his speech, "Newspapers will continue to lose their significance as long as they fail to interest youngsters and keep lily-white staffs," he also said, "newspapers are ceding younger readers to television and the Internet by not offering anything of interest to them."

Read more here . . .
http://www.rochesterdandc.com/news/0221story19_news.shtml

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MEDIA EATS ITS YOUNG

Here's a quick blip about the late Diana Princess of Wales' ex-lover James Hewitt who was fired before he even started. FOX News was ready to hire the former tank commander for a reportedly \$80k per year to serve as a war correspondent until a British tabloid reported the move to the public. Hewitt has already launched a million dollar law suit.

Read the whole story here . . .
<http://www.jeffansell.com/Newsletter/BUMP04Feb2003.htm>

As you can see above, in a heartbeat media will turn on its own without blinking an eye, so how does the average person on the street fair? Click the link below to find out.

Reporter Caught in the Wreckage of BABY CLONE story – USA Today
<http://www.jeffansell.com/Newsletter/BUMP03Feb2003.htm>

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MEDIA MONOPOLY AFFECTS YOUR BUSINESS

According to former Financial Times writer Nick Denton, "America's newspapers in particular are lazy monopolies."

He also feels that new news media is "raucous, sloppy and amateurish."

MediaPost's Dana Blankenthorn put an interesting spin on it when he wrote, "In the days when New York had dozens of newspapers, each one had their own ideological, sociological, religious, or ethnic axe to grind. There was news for every taste, each paper aiming squarely at bending

events to suit the prejudices of its publishers, and the perceived prejudices of its readers.”

The horizon is shifting and unfortunately not to the advantage of anyone with a message to share. It's getting harder every day to make sure your message is reported accurately.

Read more from Dana Blankenthorn at MediaPost here . . .
http://www.mediapost.com/dtfs_dsp_news.cfm?newsId=193933

Read Rick Denton's take here . . .
<http://www.nickdenton.org/archives/003479.html#3479>

NY Times revises Employees Ethics Policies . . .
<http://www.jeffansell.com/Newsletter/BUMP05Feb2003.htm>

Press tycoon “Rupert Murdoch argued strongly for a war with Iraq in an interview this week. Which might explain why his 175 editors around the world are backing it too,” writes Roy Greenslade.

Read more at MediaGuardian.com . . .
<http://media.guardian.co.uk/mediaguardian/story/0,7558,896864,00.html>

Lowry Mays, founder and CEO of Clear Channel oversees 1,233 radio stations with 100 million listeners across 50 states, a company with \$8 billion in revenues and a \$23 billion market cap, recently said, “We're not in the business of providing news and information. We're simply in the business of selling our customers products.”

Read more . . .
<http://www.fortune.com/fortune/ceo/articles/0,15114,423802,00.html>

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IF YOU DON'T LIKE THE NEWS
GO OUT AND MAKE SOME YOURSELF

Did Orville Schell, dean of UC Berkeley's Graduate School of Journalism really say this? Yeah, he did and he meant it.

This time around though, the Wall Street Journal may have taken it too literally.

Basically the WSJ ran an Iraq war piece in their op-ed section that they actually conscripted and gained support for from European leaders, and then simultaneously reported information from the editorial piece like it was news on their front page under the headline “ European Leaders Declare Support for U.S. on Iraq.” It happened a couple of weeks ago, and in retrospect considering what is happening on the Iraq War American public dissent front, you will see how dangerous the practice is. On a side note, the story also led the New York Times Friday edition. Apparently they thought it was real news and reported it as such.

I know this sounds complicated, and it is, but instead of me trying to explain the details take a look at the link below on CalendarLive from the LA Times.

You might even have to read the article a couple of times to absorb what really happened, but when you finally get a clear picture you'll realize that it's often not what you say, but how you say it that makes a difference.

Read the CalendarLive LA Times article here . . .
<http://www.jeffansell.com/Newsletter/BUIMP06Feb2003.htm>

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FRIDAY AFTERNOON LINK

If your work is caught up on Friday afternoon take 5 and check out this link. The site is an aggregation of a wide variety of Urban Legends with categories as diverse as Luck, Business and my favorite is QUOTES.

For a bit of fun, click below . . .
<http://www.snopes.com/>

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That's it for this addition of News & Views.
I hope you found it informative and valuable.

I'm Jeff Ansell,

Be well

One last time before I sign off . . .

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Check into my News & Views site for updates between Newsletters.

<http://www.jeffansell.com/newsansell.htm>

I'm always interested in your comments and viewpoints.

_____ Forward News & Views to a friend or colleague _____

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