

CHAPTER IV

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Objectives

- 1) Explain the difference between agency and individual responsibilities.
- 2) Identify with the public's fears and how they should be addressed.
- 3) Identify tactics for building a good Prescribed Fire Public Relations Program.

Introduction

In 1950, Florida proudly proclaimed a population of 2.8 million residents. By 1970 the population had soared to 6.8 million. The 1970 population represents an approximate density of one person for every five acres of land. With 35 million acres of land Florida is rapidly approaching a population that will exceed one person for every two acres of land. In the not too distant past most fires burned with little or no impact on the citizens of Florida. Other than the few individuals directly involved in each fire, Floridians paid little attention. Tourists might stop and gawk, especially at larger fires close to the road. Extremely large fires, often in the Everglades might draw media attention. The smell of burning muck would penetrate the best air conditioning systems available to the high-rises on Miami Beach but other than this minor inconvenience life went on without interruption. With the opening of Disney World in 1971, Florida was forever changed.

Now people were attracted to Florida for a variety of new activities often in new locations. Housing developments and golf courses sprang up in scattered, remote locations. For wildland fire managers this new era was marked not by Disney World but by events during the 1980's. First, in 1981 fires threatened the new development of Palm Coast just north of Daytona Beach. In 1983 wildfires struck new housing developments in Golden Gate Estates and Palm Coast. In Golden Gate, just east of Naples, fire fighters struggled with a wildfire burning in a portion of the Big Cypress drained for development. With changing land use the area had not burned in several years and control was difficult. Sadly, Florida Division of Forestry Ranger Marco Miranda was killed while attempting to stop this fire and protect homes in the area. Less than a week later on Black Sunday 130 homes were destroyed when fires stormed through Palm Coast, a new development near Daytona Beach. Similar scenarios occurred in 1985 and culminated in 1998 when hundreds of homes were destroyed. Today, in Florida, every woodland fire is a concern to Floridians.

Prescribed burners know the importance of fire and its role in managing fuel loads throughout Florida. They also know that fuel load management is only one of the many essential values associated with prescribed fire. While prescribed fire may be essential for Florida land managers its continued use is dependent upon broad public support.

Abraham Lincoln had this to say about public sentiment or public opinion; “Public sentiment is everything. With it nothing can fail. Without it nothing can succeed.”

The Webster dictionary defines Public Relations as “the methods and activities employed to promote a favorable relationship with the public.” Who is responsible for Public Relations? Individual prescribed burners often respond that it is not their job. In fact agencies and many organizations dealing with prescribed fire have special departments or individuals assigned to public education and information. These individuals can design and implement a highly successful Public Relations Program if the prescribed burner provides the necessary ingredients.

While this chapter should be useful to anyone concerned with prescribed fire it has been designed for the Prescribed Burn Manager and individual prescribed burners.

Image

Public relations is the art of convincing others that “we are the good guys”. Our individual, as well as company or agency image is not what we are or how we perceive ourselves, but rather how we and our employer are perceived by the public. Image is important because it fosters public support, favorable press, and program continuation. Who is responsible for image development? You are! Agency or company policy may dictate how and when to disseminate information, but you are the emissary.

Every prescribed burner communicates with the public on a daily basis. While verbal and written communications are important tools they are not the only means of communication. The clichés “Actions speak louder than words” and “A good picture is worth a thousand words” are especially true for agency personnel working to develop a positive public image. While it is important to stress perception as a key component in image development it is equally important to make sure that your image is a reflection of the truth.

Benefits

Maintaining a positive image for prescribed burning is essential. Continued public support and favorable media coverage will help insure program continuation. Floridians have shown support for prescribed burning but it is important to remember that this support is generally broad and non specific. The media and the public may be confused about which agency is conducting a prescribed burn on a specific area but they will long remember mistakes or perceived mistakes by prescribed burners. Individual prescribed burners must accept responsibility for improving their skills and increasing their knowledge about wildland fire. Furthermore each individual should encourage higher professional standards for all prescribed burners.

Agency Responsibilities

If you are employed as a prescribed burner then your employer has certain duties and responsibilities. This is true if your employer is an individual landowner, a corporation, or a governmental agency. These Prescribed fire duties include; Policy, Training, Funding, Staffing, Equipment, and the Development of a Formal Public Relations Program.

Your employer's policy and commitment are usually beyond the scope of your responsibility, but there are several things you can and should do to enhance what the public thinks of you and your employer. You need to support your employer's fire management policy and be personally committed to it even though it may not be perfect. If the policy needs improvement seek opportunities for constructive input. A well formulated policy will address the needs and establish the methodology for meeting training, funding, staffing, and equipment requirements.

The motivated individual prescribed burner can assist in meeting all of these requirements. You should always look for economical ways to meet these requirements and insure that you use the resources provided to you in an efficient and productive manner.

Individual Responsibilities

- 1) Improving Communication Skills
- 2) Personal Commitment
- 3) Personal Growth
- 4) Image Development

Individual responsibilities are the focus of this chapter. Individual prescribed burners should make a personal commitment to become a spokesperson and advocate of prescribed fire. Prescribed burning is a serious and complicated business. Every prescribed burner should periodically evaluate their commitment. If you are 'only going through the motions' or 'coasting along' it is time for change. Look for ways to motivate yourself and seek specific tasks that challenge you as an individual.

Improve your communication skills. Remember that verbal communication is only a fraction of our communications. Think about all the ways that you communicate. How do you react and communicate when you are assigned an unwanted task? How do you respond to a request for assistance from other prescribed burners? Do you spend too much time criticizing others or complaining about the shortcomings of your own agency? Do you strive to learn more about fire management? Once you have examined the

variety of communication techniques that you use it is time to make sure that you are sending the intended messages.

Language skills are also important for everyone. Even if you have a media contact representative on your prescribed burn team you should still be prepared to explain the program to interested parties. Look for opportunities and start by discussing the basics. Stay focused and be honest. If you are enthusiastic about the subject you are discussing that enthusiasm can be readily communicated. When people ask questions try to give them the best answer possible. Always be truthful with your answers but emphasize the positive. When things go wrong on a burn try to spend time explaining corrective actions and proposed mitigation. If you have already established good positive communications on prescribed burns that went as planned your audience will be willing to listen and evaluate the present situation while considering your past performance. If your past performance has been flawless but you forgot to tell anyone it may be too late to use that information in an effective way.

Your personal growth and development as a prescribed burner are also important. Prescribed burning in Florida has changed dramatically and will continue to change. Mistakes that have been tolerated in the past are no longer acceptable. Today, standards and methodologies for prescribed burns are drastically improved. However, even with these improvements too many fires still escape and cause problems. The art of prescribed burning has been practiced for thousands of years. It is important that we not lose the art but now it is time to focus on the science of prescribed burning in order to assure its continued use in Florida.

Image Development

Commitment, growth, and improving communication skills are important steps for every prescribed burner. They are essential in the development of a positive image. Next let us look at the key factors that can promote a positive image. There are four basic elements: Attitude, Professionalism, Preparedness, and Teamwork.

Attitude This may be the most individualized ingredient of a good public image. Personalities have a significant influence on each person's attitude and how that attitude is portrayed. Individuals should develop an attitude that is proactive and positive. It is also important to be sincere and truthful as we express our attitude. Always try to be friendly and courteous even when others are less than perfect. When the conditions are appropriate remember to smile. Act energetic and be a good listener first. Be positive about your employer's fire management program and don't hesitate to discuss it fully and openly. Stress its strengths. Seek more fire management training. Improve your competence and knowledge of the subject but don't be afraid to say "I don't know, but I'll try to find out". Never bluff – the reputation and rapport you worked so hard to establish can be destroyed all too quickly. Make sure your personal demeanor and habits are a credit to you and your employer. Your attitude is the foundation for the ***Image*** that you project. While the term '*attitude adjustment*' may have many connotations the

concept has merit. Everyone should periodically examine their attitude. Often a minor adjustment can make major improvements for everyone.

Professionalism Prescribed burning requires special skills and knowledge. Each burner should be willing to demonstrate that they are professionals. If you are with an agency and have a uniform wear it with pride. Other clothes often serve as a uniform and these should be appropriate for the occasion. A rancher dressed in his everyday work clothes can easily project the image of a professional resource manager especially if he has years of experience. Remember that not everyone will associate your uniform with excellence. Many people think that ‘typical government employees’ routinely waste tax dollars through incompetence and laziness. One on one demonstrations of knowledge and ability are the best methods for dispelling myths.

If you have significant experience, take advantage of it. If you are representing others explain their level of experience as well. This should be done in a low key fashion or else it may backfire. Likewise don’t be afraid to say “I don’t know but I’ll try to find out.” If you use this statement be sure to follow through on your promise. Don’t try to bluff your way through an issue, don’t try to be a ‘Spin master,’ and don’t give ‘wisecracks’ as answers. The reputation and rapport that you have worked hard to establish can be destroyed with one sentence. A confident public will support a professional prescribed burning program.

Preparedness The third component of a positive image is preparedness. This applies to the equipment that we use and to each individual burner.

Some agencies require fitness standards for prescribed burners while others do not. Each individual should have personal standards of fitness which relate to the actual tasks performed on a prescribed burn. Personnel who may be responsible for suppression of spotovers should be physically fit. Even routine duty on a prescribed burn can require stamina and conditioning.

Persons who encounter health problems on the fire due to poor conditioning endanger the entire crew. Mental fitness is also important; prescribed burning requires focused attention. Cell phones should only be used for emergency purposes. Personal or business issues that are likely to distract you during a burn should be resolved prior to your participation. Make sure that you continue with the training and learning as long as you are involved in prescribed burning. Seek opportunities for formal training but also look for alternate learning sources such as the Internet. You should also be learning on every prescribed fire.

If you have participated in a lot of prescribed fires you have witnessed equipment failures at critical times. Most of the time these failures are the result of inexperienced operators or extreme field conditions that exceed the design limits of the equipment. All too often, however, the equipment failure is the result of improper maintenance or improper use of the equipment. Use your experience and the experience of others to make sure that you

have the right equipment for each prescribed burn and that the equipment is functional and well maintained. Under ideal conditions your equipment will be new, clean, and in good working order. It is more important that it be properly designed for the intended use on that specific prescribed burn. Older but well maintained equipment may be preferable especially if this equipment has proven itself reliable under the expected conditions. Make sure that equipment is operated in a safe and efficient manner. Equipment operators should be trained on their assigned equipment prior to the day of the burn and they should be familiar with the limits and capabilities of the equipment.

Teamwork Teamwork is the final component in building a favorable image. Prescribed burners and prescribed burning is in many ways a single issue when subjected to public scrutiny. Most prescribed burns are conducted with several crew members on site. The Division of Forestry plays a major role on most prescribed burns because they issue the authorization and they are often the Initial Attack unit if the fire escapes. They also receive a high percentage of the calls from the public and other agencies regarding prescribed burns in progress. If the Division of Forestry is familiar with your program they can provide better information and properly evaluate calls they may receive during your prescribed fire. Likewise people who may answer the phone in your office may be a critical link when you are conducting the burn. Other support personnel may also be important team members. Identify all of your team members in advance. Treat them with the respect that they deserve and keep them informed concerning field operations.

This course is a good example of the interagency cooperation that is common on many prescribed burns. Maximize your opportunities to work cooperatively with adjacent land managers and other wildland fire fighters including local fire departments. These cooperative relationships can provide manpower and equipment at critical times.

PR Planning

Planning is essential. A written plan, including a section on Public Relations is required for every prescribed burn. Public Relations professionals often use a formal planning process which is similar to the overall planning process recommended for prescribed burning. This consists of a four step process. The first stage involves *research* which identifies issues and available information sources. The second step is the development of a formal *plan of action* that will detail the actual projects required for a successful PR program. The third step is the actual *implementation* of the various projects. The fourth and final step involves the *evaluation* of the entire program. PR should be a continuing program and this fourth step should revolve into the first step which will produce an improved program. For this reason Planning and Evaluation is considered a continual or ongoing process.

Research Identify audiences (media, elected officials, civic and group leaders, neighborhood associations, businesses, other agencies, and the general public). Identify key people who can help spread your message.

Develop measurable objectives when appropriate. (For Example: Two favorable media articles prior to field operations. A minimum approval rating of 60% after surrounding neighbors have been canvassed).

Develop a list or summary of information that should be communicated. Identify strategies and methods for communication (e. g. press releases, press conferences, attendance/presentations at meetings, fact sheets, public notices, personal contacts, telephone calls, and Internet postings).

Develop a list of reference resources that can provide pertinent information (literature, brochures, websites, videos, slideshows, power point programs, posters, educational programs, organizations, individuals). Don't overlook retired people in your community who may have expertise vital to your program.

Action Plan Develop a written plan. Your action plan should include the basics; How, What, When, and Where will you communicate? Identify your target audiences and modify your program as appropriate for that audience. Develop a Fact Sheet on prescribed fire using the 'Fact Sheet' (Attachment #1) as an example. Develop a contact list with phone numbers and make sure these calls are made at the right time.

Don't give the appearance of being secretive about your burning program. Keep all adjacent landowners informed of your prescribed burn activities (Attachment #2, "Dear Neighbor" letter). If you anticipate the likelihood of smoke in an area, notify everyone living in the area likely to be impacted by your burn. Apologize in advance for any temporary inconvenience you might cause them. Briefly explain what you plan to accomplish by burning; emphasize hazard reduction and wildlife habitat improvement when applicable. Be especially aware of anyone with respiratory problems. If you will be burning from a county or state road, or anticipate any residual highway smoke problems, inform the appropriate law enforcement agency of your plans and let them know you might ask for their assistance to help traffic flow. Use smoke-ahead signs on all public roads.

Implementation As you communicate the plan take into consideration the basics of good interpersonal relations (Attachment #3) and include all the elements of good public relations in your program (Attachment #4). Be sure to follow the "Do's" and "Don'ts" of working with the media (Attachments #5&6). Work to develop rapport with the local news media. Invite newspaper and television reporters out to one of your burns. Ensure the safety of media personnel by assigning an experienced prescribed burner to be with them while on the burn. A good public image does not just happen over night. It is built gradually and maintaining it is a continual process.

To build your image as a professional resource manager, start with what you want. If you work for an agency, take advantage of the fact that people will listen to uniformed individuals. Capitalize upon the public's image of you as a protector of the environment. Think ahead to likely questions and how you will respond. Develop an educational litany that is articulate, informative and confident. Passive acceptance of public perceptions

will not build image. Be assertive. Believe and effectively sell yourself and prescribed fire as a necessity to the health of the ecosystem, but be careful not to appear arrogant. Don't talk down to your audience.

Most lay people have a fear of fire. Take these fears seriously but also take the opportunity to allay them. Discuss the benefits of the judicious use of fire and the role it has historically played in shaping and maintaining ecosystems. Involve the public in developing safety measures. Respond to their concerns without appearing overconfident.

Some people see us as the killers of helpless wildlife and the destroyers of America's forests. If we do not respond to such accusations our silence is often misinterpreted to mean tacit acknowledgement or deception. Do not hesitate to discuss the fact that prescribed fires do temporarily pollute the atmosphere; may inconvenience and in some cases endanger motorists on smoke-impacted highways; and may deposit ashes in swimming pools. But also discuss the need to balance the benefits to be gained from a prescribed fire program against such deleterious side-effects. Take a pro-active role. Describe how prescribed burners mitigate these undesirable by-products. Write letters to the editor and seek out public speaking engagements. Engage people in open, honest discussions about fire and the ambivalent attitudes common in our society. Incorporate the fact that fire exclusion is not a viable option in fire-dependent ecosystems. Make sure your audience understands that it is not a question of fire or no fire, but whether humankind should proactively determine when and how these ecosystems should burn and when and how "pollutants" are released. Don't convey through words or mannerisms that a person's input and concerns are not worth your time because you are the expert and know what is best.

Evaluate Evaluation is the final step in a formal PR program. It is also the first step in beginning a new cycle in the process. During the evaluation phase you should have both formal and informal processes to determine the outcome of your efforts. How will you determine that objectives have been met? How will you measure success? Some formal surveys may be appropriate but remember to listen to all input. A log of phone calls about your program can provide valuable input however, don't just rely on someone else to do your work and automatically fill out more forms. While image assessment is discussed in the following section many of the issues also apply to the evaluation process.

Image Assessment Successful public relations mean that you have created a favorable public image. A periodic assessment of your image is appropriate for individuals, agencies, and prescribed burn teams. It should be conducted as part of the evaluation process associated with a formal PR plan but it should also be an informal ongoing process for everyone.

Listen to friend and foe alike. Be open-minded and accept just criticism without rationalization. Watch, read, and listen to the press. This may help you respond to false and biased criticisms before they gain widespread support. Strive to be honest and objective as you review these issues. Identify areas that need improvement and look for solutions.

Summary

Good public relations don't just happen. It requires the research and the development of a detailed written plan followed by implementation and evaluation.

The foundation of public relations is a favorable public *image*. For prescribed burners there are a multitude of public images but they all begin with the image of the individual prescribed burner. Each agency's public image is a combination of actions by individuals within that agency. Each person can develop their image through positive action to improve their professionalism, attitude, preparedness, and teamwork.

Image is not always what we are but how we are perceived. Public relations can only be successful when it is based on truth. A dedicated team of professional prescribed burners implementing sound plans is the key. With agency support and a sound public relations **program** public sentiment will demand success.

Assessment of both our image and our PR program is a basic requirement. Remove yourself and be objective. Listen to friend and foe. Continue to fine tune successful programs but modify or replace those programs that aren't working. Individuals should strive to improve their self image. Self improvement will enhance both your individual and team image.

Media help and support is important but the real responsibility rests with each individual. We are the ones who make a difference. The media and the public evaluate us and our image every time they see us in action. We communicate by our mannerisms, actions, attitude, and demeanor. We also communicate through our written and spoken words. Finally, we also communicate when we say and do nothing.

Attachment # PR-1

PRESCRIBED BURNING FACT SHEET

WHO: (Insert your company/ agency's name)

WHAT: *Prescribed burning is fire applied in a knowledgeable and skillful manner on a specific land area under selected weather conditions to accomplish predetermined and well defined management objectives.*

WHEN: Prescribed burning can have many beneficial effects, but not all prescribed fires are beneficial. Consequences to every prescribed fire opportunity should be recognized. Proper planning and execution are necessary to minimize any detrimental effects to the air, soil, water, wildlife, human health and welfare and aesthetics. The weather and the fuel are the most important elements that must be taken into consideration. The weather's separate and combined effects influence fuel moisture which is critical to a successful prescribed burn. Some resource management objectives can be met with a single fire, some require consecutive fires and some objectives can only be accomplished by burning periodically throughout the year.

WHERE: In an area where it is needed, according to the objectives that wish to be accomplished. If an area that will be burned is too large, it will be broken up into 1-day burning blocks or smaller areas. It is also important to over plan the number of acres that will be burned by 10 to 25 percent so that substitutions can be made if necessary and also so additional areas can be burned if favorable weather conditions occur. Be aware that there are restrictions where prescribed burning can be performed.

In 2000 a total of 654,858 acres were burned in Florida through the use of prescribed burning.

WHY: Prescribed burning is used for several reasons such as:

Rough Reduction - The process of removing flammable vegetation and dead material such as pine needles, logs and leaves that build up on the forest floor over time. Removing accumulated vegetation and dead material helps to reduce the amount of fuel and that helps to offset the risk of a wildfire during harvesting.

Improving access -Hikers and nature enthusiasts find it easier to travel and it increases a hunter's visibility. Also burning opens up the forest for easy access to timber sale areas and improves the efficiency to measure the timber sale volume area, to timber mark and harvest.

Managing competing vegetation - Fire is used to thin out undesirable vegetation so that desirable vegetation can thrive without having to compete for water, nutrients and growing space which otherwise, may significantly lower the growth rates.

Managing Endangered Species - Habitat preferences of several endangered species, including the Florida panther, gopher tortoise, indigo snake and red-cockaded woodpecker, are enhanced by prescribed burning.

Enhancing Appearance - Prescribed burning is the practical way to maintain many visually attractive vegetative communities such as longleaf pine wiregrass. It also perpetuates many plant

species such as the Florida Bonzamia, Harper's Beauty, White-Birds-in-a-Nest and the Florida Skullcap.

Plant Management - Fire breaks down complex organic molecules in plants to smaller molecules. By breaking the molecules down, fire makes them more water-soluble which in turn allows the nutrients to be used again by other growing plants. Fire also changes both the composition and density of the forest. Ash and nutrients occupy less space than trees and shrubs.

Wildlife Habitat Improvement - Prescribed burning substantially benefits wildlife by stimulating food and seed production and by creating openings for feeding and travel. A mosaic of burned and unburned areas tends to maximize "edge effect" which promotes a large and varied wildlife population.

Brownspot Disease Control- Brownspot disease is a fungal infection that may seriously weaken and eventually kill longleaf pine seedlings. Once the seedlings of a plant become infected burning is the most practical method of disease control. Control is recommended when more than 20 percent of the seedlings are infected.

Site and Seedbed Preparation - Prescribed burning is useful for seeding, planting or natural regeneration. On open sites, fire alone can expose adequate mineral soil and control competing vegetation until seedlings become established. Prescribed fire also recycles nutrients.

Improving Range Forage for Livestock - Prescribed burning is useful for improving range forage for livestock. The grass that sprouts immediately after a burn is usually more tender and richer in minerals and nutrients.

HOW: Prescription burning is a highly technical job requiring knowledge of fire behavior, suppression techniques and environmental effects of fire. The entire prescribed burning process has four steps:

1. **Planning**
2. **Preparing**
3. **Execution**
4. **Evaluation**

The **planning** process is when the objective for the burn is determined and geared towards achieving a measurable result. After developing an initial plan, a contingency plan (back-up plan) is devised. This back-up plan is used in case something goes wrong during the burn.

An initial plan will include the **preparation** steps that will need to be taken in order for the prescribed burning to run well. These preparation steps will include a listing of the equipment that will be used and the personnel that need to be present.

The **execution step** is just the implementation of the developed plan.

Evaluating answers the question "Did we meet our objectives?" If not, you find out why to avoid any errors that may occur next time.

Attachment # PR-2
WEKIWA SPRINGS STATE PARK

1800 Wekiwa Circle, Apopka, FL 32723

407/889-9920

Dear Neighbor:

As part of the resource management program at Wekiwa Springs State Park, we are planning to burn the pinelands adjacent to your property. State park lands are managed as natural areas and periodic fires are needed to keep the pinelands in good condition. Fire is a natural and important ecological force which shaped these pinelands over the years. The plants and animals which live in the pinelands are adapted to and depend upon periodic fires for their continued survival.

As a neighbor of the park, you will derive certain benefits from the burn program at Wekiwa Springs. These benefits include the removal of accumulated fuels which will lessen the possibility of a devastating wildfire damaging your property; the increase of wildlife and wildflowers within view of your backyard; and the restoration of scenic vistas across the pinelands as the undergrowth is reduced.

We plan to burn the pinelands adjacent to your property within the next few days if conditions are suitable. Every precaution will be taken to keep smoke and ash from leaving the park.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss any concerns which you may have about our burn program. Please call Wekiwa Springs State Park at 889-9920 from 8 AM to 12 noon if you would like more information.

Jim Murian Park Manager

Rosi Mulholland Park Biologist

Attachment # PR-3

BASICS OF GOOD INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

1. Be a good listener.
2. Be sensitive to others' needs & feelings.
3. Assume others are doing their best.
4. Don't take criticisms aimed at agency personally.
5. Don't overreact or respond defensively.
6. Be helpful & cooperative with public & coworkers.
7. Maintain a positive attitude.
8. Keep sense of humor but don't use at others' expense.
9. Be honest & truthful.
10. Remember your appearance conveys a message.
11. Give credit where credit is due.

Attachment # PR-4

ELEMENTS OF GOOD PUBLIC RELATIONS

1. Every action makes an impression.
2. Good public relations are a prerequisite of success.
3. The public is actually many publics.
4. Truth and honesty are essential.
5. Offense is more effective than defense.
6. Communication is the key to good public relations.
7. Planning is essential.

Attachment # PR-5

THE DO'S OF WORKING WITH THE NEWS MEDIA

1. Excluding news media may be illegal.
2. Assume news media are professionals.
3. Empathize with reporter's needs.
4. Know who you are talking to.
5. Give equal consideration to all.
6. Local vs. regional vs. national media.
7. Know what you are talking about.
8. Conflict, tragedy, etc. are newsworthy
9. Provide complete story.
10. Take initiative in relating bad news.
11. Be above board.
12. Pay attention to dates, times, places, and spelling.
13. Be brief.
14. Be timely and punctual, return calls.
15. Be prepared.
16. Keep promises.
17. Be positive and courteous.
18. Monitor news programs and newspapers.
19. Document your contacts.

Attachment # PR-6

THE DON'T'S OF WORKING WITH THE NEWS MEDIA

1. Give or expect favoritism.
2. Attempt to talk " off the record. "
3. Make off-hand remarks in front of reporters.
4. Hide behind technical jargon.
5. Disappear when unfavorable news breaks.
6. Stonewall.
7. Try to fool the press.
8. Try to be a news personality.
9. Propagandize.
10. Tolerate any openly belligerent behavior.