The Internal Perceptions of Public Relations at GTE North

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

by

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Contents

1 Literature Review, 1

2 Statement of Problem, 4

3 Methodology, 5

4 Results/Findings, 8

5 Conclusions, 16

6 Works Cited, 20

7 Appendices

GTE Midwestern Telephone Operations, 21
General Telephone Company of Indiana, 22
Survey correspondence, 23
Survey questions, 25
Survey results, 31
Literature Review

The purpose of public relations practice is to establish a two-way communication to resolve conflicts of interest and to establish mutual understanding based on truth, knowledge and full information. This communication is conducted with all the "publics" an organization comes in contact with both internally and externally. Among these are the media, the community, investors and the employees (Black 4).

The need for effective two-way communication is a vital element in effective public relations. Many forms of misunderstanding spring from lack of communication. The difficulties that arise in today's corporations are often the result of lack of communication, and management is continually being required to give information more readily and clearly to employees and to the public. Good communication can be a major contributor to the elimination of inefficiency, waste, conflict, laziness and other problems. (Black 6).

Communication within the organization is equally, if not more important than communication with those on the outside. Communication is the lifeblood of any relationship and this includes the relationship between employees and their employers. Employees are reported to "increasingly expect their companies to do something about their problems and complaints. They are complaining at all levels that they want and need a lot more information than their companies provide."


A disgruntled employee will convey dissatisfaction to consumers, but a well-informed employee is satisfied and reflects positively on the company. They will be productive workers who find more enjoyment in what they do and will ultimately do a better job for the company. (Badaracco 5).

A truly informed employee is one who is not only aware of the current issues occurring within the company, but one who has a broad grasp of the company's overall structure and purpose. It is always more efficient when one hand knows what the other is doing. Employees should be aware of all the components within the company and know how each contributes to the whole. Of course, most employees understand why the accounting department exists, they know about the customer service division and of course they can relate to marketing and advertising, but do they understand what their organization's public relations efforts are all about?

Creating an accurate awareness of public relations among the employees will stimulate a chain of benefits for the company. First of all, it would promote an understanding among all employees of the purpose of public relations and its very reason for existence. Furthermore, this understanding would foster an increased positive attitude among employees about public relations and the functions it performs. Finally, this positive attitude will create a better environment in which employees are more likely to aid in the public relations efforts as well as be more
responsive and supportive.

Although the planning and implementation of the public relations efforts are centralized in one department, they should still be important to everyone within the organization. The support, understanding and assistance of those within the company will be a positive factor in the continued success of the public relations efforts and ultimately of the company as a whole.
Statement of Problem

The employees' current perceptions of public relations must be studied to determine what their perceptions are. Lack of knowledge or misperceptions which are identified may then become the focus of communication efforts. This study focuses on the employees of one specific company, GTE North in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The major question addressed is, "How do the GTE North employees perceive the Public Affairs Department?"

Research Questions

The research, designed to answer this question, can be broken down into more specific problems:

1. Do the employees know what the Public Affairs Department does, and how much contact do they have with it?

2. How do they view its effectiveness?

3. What do employees think the Public Affairs Department could do as a means of improvement?

4. Have the employee's attitudes changed about the company because of the work of the Public Affairs Department?

5. Have the employees seen any changes in the company image within the community as a result of public relations efforts?
Methodology

GTE is one of the world's leading communications and electronics companies. It has three core businesses: telecommunications, lighting and precision materials. The corporation employs approximately 160,000 people in 48 states and 33 countries. Local telephone service is provided by GTE in portions of 31 states which include Indiana.

The Indiana operations, recently renamed "GTE North," are a part of GTE Corporation's MidWestern Telephone Operations, or GTE MTO Inc., headquartered in Westfield, Indiana. GTE MTO Inc. serves customers in portions of ten midwestern states which are Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. The headquarters for the Indiana operations, or GTE North, are located in Fort Wayne, Indiana. GTE North, hereafter referred to simply as GTE, has more than 5,000 employees working throughout the state in the four divisions of Fort Wayne, Richmond, Terre Haute and Elkhart. (See Appendix A).

Fort Wayne was chosen as the location for the research because it is the site of the state headquarters as well as the state's Public Affairs Department. By limiting the research to Fort Wayne, any differences in opinions that may have appeared as a result of the difference in physical distance to the Public Affairs Department were eliminated.

The research consisted of structured oral interviews with 15 employees divided
between the three GTE locations in Fort Wayne: the Wayne Trace, Berry Street and US 24 facilities. Eight of these employees were classified as management and the remaining seven were non-management or hourly workers. Eight of the interviewees were female and seven were male. Of the females, three were management and five were hourly. As for the men, five were management and two were hourly.

The employees were chosen by upper management given the criteria of selecting those workers who were representative of the group at each of their respective locations. (See Appendix B). The interviews were conducted on two consecutive Tuesdays in the month of March, 1988. The employees were interviewed during their work day in a conference room at their particular location.

During the interview, subjects were asked to respond orally to a survey. The interviews were approximately twenty minutes in length and each consisted of a total of 31 questions. These questions were asked in a variety of formats which included yes/no questions, rankings, unprompted naming, prompted naming and open-ended discussion questions. (See Appendix C).

The content of the survey can be broken down into four major areas which measured: 1) The overall awareness and knowledge of the Public Affairs Department and its functions, 2) the perceptions regarding GTE's involvement with the community, 3) the opinions and attitudes toward employee communication and external communications, and 4) the opinions about the importance of the Public
Affairs Department, its individual functions and the company image as a whole.

The final two questions of the survey gave the employee the opportunity to express in his or her own words the feelings they have about the purpose for the Public Affairs Department and how it might be improved. These questions were designed to stimulate discussion and gather any additional opinions and perceptions that did not surface earlier in the survey. The answers were recorded onto a cassette tape for later review.
Results/Findings

The answers given by each employee were systematically recorded during the interview on individual survey forms. Upon completion of the interviews, responses were tallied for each question and compiled together on a separate survey form. Totals of all the answers were included and a distinction was made between those replies given by the management and those from hourly employees. The number of replies was verified with the number surveyed to insure the accuracy of the results. Percentages of the total number surveyed for each question were also computed. Finally, the information was organized into a concise, readable format for better interpretation. (See Appendix D).

Awareness and knowledge of the Public Affairs Department and its functions

The first section of the survey dealt with the employee's awareness of the five functions of GTE's Public Affairs Department: community affairs, external communication, employee communication, governmental affairs and consumer affairs.

Subjects were asked to name, without prompting, the functions performed in the Public Affairs Department. The most common answer could be interpreted as external communication. Eighty percent of those surveyed knew that public affairs was responsible in some manner, for communicating to a general, non-specific public. This answer was often buried in statements such as, "They are a liaison between the
company and the public; they try and maintain a good image for GTE."

About half (53%) of the employees recognized the fact that the department is responsible for community affairs and nearly half (46%) knew of their connection with employee communications. The consumer affairs function was not named at all and the governmental affairs area was identified by three people (20%).

However, after being prompted, 78 percent of those previously unaware did state they knew about the consumer affairs function and 42 percent said they were aware of the governmental affairs function. Additional incorrect responses included the activities of renting video equipment, servicing customers and fundraising.

It is interesting to note that on a whole the correct identification of the public affairs functions by the management was twice that of the hourly employees (See Table 1). This is understandable in the fact that management employees generally have a broader scope of the company and are aware of areas other than their own.

Just as the interviewees were most familiar with the external communication function, they also ranked it as the most important. When asked which function was the least important, a most common reply was, "This is a difficult question because I believe they are all equally important." When the choice was finally made, the answers usually corresponded to that function with which the employee was not aware of or knew the least about. This tended to be community affairs or consumer affairs (See Table 2).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Management</th>
<th>Hourly</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>External Communication</td>
<td>8 -100%</td>
<td>4 - 57%</td>
<td>12 - 80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Affairs</td>
<td>6 - 75%</td>
<td>2 - 28%</td>
<td>8 - 42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Communication</td>
<td>4 - 50%</td>
<td>3 - 42%</td>
<td>7 - 46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental Affairs</td>
<td>2 - 25%</td>
<td>1 - 14%</td>
<td>3 - 20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Affairs</td>
<td>0 - 0%</td>
<td>0 - 0%</td>
<td>0 - 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N = 15 - 100%)
TABLE 2

Perceptions of Most and Least Important Functions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Management</th>
<th>Hourly</th>
<th>Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most</td>
<td>Least</td>
<td>Most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Affairs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Communication</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governmental Affairs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Affairs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N = 15)
•Perceptions regarding GTE's community involvement

GTE is involved in a wide assortment of community events and programs. Some of these programs, however, were more familiar to employees than others (See Table 3). More specifically, most of the employees had heard of the Special Olympics, White Water Games, March of Dimes Walkathon and the M.S. Bikeathon. Events that spurred little or no recognition were the Leadership Fort Wayne Minority School and the Peace and Understanding Festival. In two cases employee's general awareness was fairly high, yet their awareness of GTE's involvement dropped significantly. Fifty-three percent of the employees were aware of the helium balloon giveaway at the Three Rivers Festival parade, but only 20 percent realized GTE was involved. The case was the same for the ARCH Historic Preservation Awards, 46 percent were aware, but only 13 percent were aware of GTE's involvement. Very few of the employees were personally involved with any of the events except for the donation of money.

•Opinions and attitudes toward employee and external communications

Those surveyed seemed to be more familiar with the area of employee communication, and rightly so. This is the aspect of the Public Affairs Department that deals, or should deal, directly with them. By far, the most well-known, well-read piece of information that reached the employee is the FYI Weekly Bulletin (See Table 4). One-hundred percent of those surveyed were able to name this publication without prompting and later cited it as their best source of information. GTE North
TABLE 3

Awareness of Community Affairs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>event</th>
<th>Aware of event</th>
<th>Aware of GTE inv.</th>
<th>Personal Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Olympics</td>
<td>14 / 1</td>
<td>12 / 2</td>
<td>2 /12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March of Dimes Walkathon</td>
<td>14 / 1</td>
<td>14 / 1</td>
<td>7 / 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts Foundation Renaissance Campaign</td>
<td>13 / 2</td>
<td>13 / 0</td>
<td>1 /12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. Bikeathon</td>
<td>12 / 3</td>
<td>9 / 3</td>
<td>3 / 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Greenway Triathlon</td>
<td>11 / 4</td>
<td>10 / 1</td>
<td>2 / 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Water Games</td>
<td>11 / 4</td>
<td>7 / 5</td>
<td>1 /11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Initiative Program</td>
<td>10 / 5</td>
<td>10 / 0</td>
<td>1 / 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Rivers Festival Parade -- Helium</td>
<td>8 / 7</td>
<td>3 / 5</td>
<td>0 / 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balloon Giveaway</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantastic Friday (Adopt a School)</td>
<td>7 / 8</td>
<td>7 / 0</td>
<td>0 / 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCH Historic Preservation Awards</td>
<td>7 / 8</td>
<td>2 / 5</td>
<td>0 / 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Salute</td>
<td>5 /10</td>
<td>2 / 1</td>
<td>0 / 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Friday night dinner)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youtheater (Peter Pan)</td>
<td>4 /10</td>
<td>2 / 2</td>
<td>0 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Fort Wayne Minority School</td>
<td>3 /12</td>
<td>2 / 1</td>
<td>0 / 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace &amp; Understanding Festival</td>
<td>0 /15</td>
<td>0 / 0</td>
<td>0 / 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N= 15)
TABLE 4
Awareness of Internal and External Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Communications</th>
<th>Aware of Comm.</th>
<th>Aware of P.A. inv.</th>
<th>Read/Use Regularly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FYI weekly bulletins (on boards &amp; racks)</td>
<td>15 / 0</td>
<td>13 / 2</td>
<td>14 / 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectrum (quarterly video magazine)</td>
<td>15 / 0</td>
<td>12 / 3</td>
<td>13 / 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE North News (MTO Newspaper)</td>
<td>15 / 0</td>
<td>11 / 4</td>
<td>12 / 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE Together</td>
<td>14 / 1</td>
<td>10 / 4</td>
<td>10 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE North News (posted on boards)</td>
<td>13 / 2</td>
<td>9 / 4</td>
<td>13 / 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Topics (supervisors only)</td>
<td>7 / 8</td>
<td>4 / 3</td>
<td>5 / 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External Communications</th>
<th>Aware of Comm.</th>
<th>Aware of P.A. inv.</th>
<th>Read/Use Regularly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate case information in the media</td>
<td>15 / 0</td>
<td>14 / 1</td>
<td>12 / 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer bill inserts</td>
<td>14 / 1</td>
<td>5 / 9</td>
<td>8 / 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed messages on customer bills</td>
<td>11 / 4</td>
<td>2 / 9</td>
<td>8 / 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(N=15)
News was also named by over half of the people, but their recollection was usually for "MTO News." This confusion most likely stems from the recent name change. Some other employees also included in their description of communication coming from the company, things such as the weekly job-line, posters for charities, volunteer connection and customer excellence materials.

After being prompted, the remaining publications were recognized by nearly 100 percent of those surveyed. The only forms of communication which did not achieve total recognition were Hot Topics and the information included in customer bills (See Table 5).

If an employee was aware of a publication, he or she was also usually aware that public affairs was involved. This was the case for most of the employee communications, with the exception of Hot Topics and the information placed in customer bills, where very few (less than 33%) were aware of public affair's involvement (See Table 4).

As far as the reception of the publications is concerned, the response was quite favorable. Nearly all employees aware of a publication also read it on a regular basis. In the survey, GTE Together was the least-read publication, followed closely by the information included in the customer bills.

Answers regarding the best sources of information from the company ranged from inter-office memos and word-of-mouth to FYI Weekly Bulletin and GTE North
TABLE 5
Recognition of Employee Communications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee Communications</th>
<th>Awareness With Prompt</th>
<th>Awareness Without Prompt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FYI Weekly Bulletins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE North News Newspaper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectrum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE Together</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE North News Bulletins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Topics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage of Employees
News. When the possible answers were limited to publications only, FYI Weekly Bulletin was regarded as the best source of information by 100 percent of those surveyed.

- Opinions about the importance of the Public Affairs Department, its individual functions and the company image

Employees were asked to rank the importance of several specific areas within public relations on a scale of one to five where five was very important and one was not important. On an overall basis, eighty percent seemed to think that the existence of a Public Affairs Department was very important. This perception was equal for both management and hourly employees. The rest of the opinions tended to remain in the upper half of this five-point scale (See Table 6).

A surprisingly slight majority (53%) felt that it was very important that GTE keep the media informed about issues concerning the company. There is an interesting contrast between this answer and the earlier overwhelming opinion that external communication was the foremost important aspect of the Public Affairs Department. It is especially interesting to note that 50 percent of the management rated the importance of GTE's relations with the media a three on the five-point scale.

Unlike with external communication, the interviewees' opinions regarding employee communication cannot be mistaken. One hundred percent regarded it as very important. Nearly as many (86%) felt the same about the relations with the
TABLE 6

Importance of Public Affairs and its Various Functions as Viewed by Management and Hourly Employees

*Key: Bold = Management response
  Plain = Hourly response*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance</th>
<th>Not very important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Importance of the overall Public Affairs Department:</td>
<td>0,0  1,0  0,1</td>
<td>1,0  6,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance for GTE employees to be involved with the community:</td>
<td>0,0  1,1  1,1</td>
<td>6,4  1,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance for GTE to financially support of community programs:</td>
<td>0,0  0,0  2,1</td>
<td>5,2  1,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance for GTE to keep the local TV, radio stations and newspapers informed about issues concerning the company:</td>
<td>0,0  0,1  4,0</td>
<td>2,0  3,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance for GTE to advertise locally:</td>
<td>1,0  0,0  3,1</td>
<td>1,1  4,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance for GTE to communicate with its employees:</td>
<td>0,0  0,0  0,0</td>
<td>0,0  8,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importance of GTE's relations with the state and federal legislative bodies:</td>
<td>0,0  0,0  0,2</td>
<td>0,0  8,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
state and federal legislative bodies. This is an interesting response since very few (20%) were initially aware of the governmental relations function, yet they still later rated it as being highly important.

The opinions expressed regarding the company image were remarkably dissimilar. Employees were asked to rank the image five years ago and again as they see it today, using another scale of one to five. The image five years ago was ranked in an even distribution between numbers one and four. The image five years ago was rated in an even distribution between numbers one and four; 26 percent were undecided. No one gave it a five, or very good rating. Today's image scored slightly higher with 40 percent undecided and 26 percent rating it as very good.

On an individual basis, 46 percent rated the image as moving up one or two points in the last five years, 13 percent said it stayed the same and 20 percent rated it as decreasing by one or two points.

As for the employees' attitude toward their company, 33 percent said it was very good five years ago and 46 percent said it was very good today. Forty percent assessed it as becoming better during the five-year span while 33 percent thought it has become worse. It is interesting to note that in this section there was no significant split between the answers of management and hourly employees.

Estimates of the number of employees employed in the Public Affairs Department varied from five, six and ten, which were the most common, to 25 and
even 200. More of the conservative, as well as accurate answers, were those of the management's. The extremely large figures could have been the result of a misunderstanding of the question and the thought that it referred to the Public Affairs Department on the corporate level.

Seventy-three percent of the employees felt they had sufficient information about what the Public Affairs Department does while 23 percent did not. All but one of the management employees interviewed felt they had enough information, while the hourly employees were more evenly divided between the two. Some comments from those who desired more information said the best way to communicate it to them would be updates on public affairs activities in the *FYI Weekly Bulletin*, more personal contact with representatives of the department and a list of the names of the Public Affairs Department employees and their job responsibilities. The need for this type of information may be highly dependent on the particular job and activities performed by the individual.

The final section of the survey dealt with the demographic make-up of the surveyed group. The time spent with the company ranged from one to 22 years and averaged at 13 years. Broken down even further, the management's average job tenure was almost twice that of the hourly employees.

The amount of time each employee had lived in Fort Wayne ranged from two to 35 years with an average of fifteen years. Fifty-three percent of those surveyed
completed some college work and two percent, which were strictly management, had a four-year degree. The age range for the interviewees was distributed between 25 and 45.

With a sample population of only 15 employees, it must be understood that these survey results should by no means be considered conclusive. They are not representative of the entire company. The results can, however, be used to shed some initial insight into some areas involving the Public Affairs Department. Despite the small number, the employees who best represented their respective areas were selected for the study. So the results, while not conclusive, still offer some reliable information that may eventually lead to new ideas, further research or progressive changes.
Conclusions

The results of the survey point to several interesting conclusions about the employees' understanding of the Public Affairs Department. Most employees seemed to know a few of public affair's general functions, the most common being external and employee communications, but they lacked familiarity or understanding of the others. Also, understanding and perception of the department was relevant to their current position in the company. For example, some positions require contact or more experience with the Public Affairs Department, while others do not.

The area which seemed to have the highest level of misunderstanding was community affairs. The employees do not recognize and value the function of community affairs because they do not have the background information to appreciate its purpose. They want their company to have a positive image within the community and expect public affairs to get it there, yet they have not considered the methods necessary to actually achieve this ideal. A surprising number of people aware of a particular community event, were not aware of their own company's involvement with it. Employee awareness of GTE's involvement with community events would increase if public affairs were to publicize it to a greater extent. This increased awareness and better understanding of why the company is involved, would ultimately stimulate more employee pride and positive attitudes.

As a part of this, the volunteer initiative program should be emphasized.
One-third of those surveyed were not even aware of this program, yet it is an excellent way to stimulate employee involvement. Increased promotion would help to increase its awareness and hopefully participation among employees. Working with activities in the community would not only give employees a sense of pride in themselves, but their involvement would benefit the company as well.

The survey results also pointed to some interesting conclusions regarding employee communications. Employees do, for the most part, read them, which is pleasing information for any communicator. The most noticeable fact in this area was a common confusion with the names for the various publications. Employees could describe them by size, shape and content, but many times could not recall the correct name.

The *FYI Weekly Bulletin*, more commonly referred to as simply "FYI", was usually named after a few minutes of thought. There was a greater problem, however, with *GTE North News*. Confusion stemmed from the fact that the newspaper produced by GTE MTO Inc., and the brief information updates on the bulletin boards in the Fort Wayne buildings both bear the same name. Also, the *GTE North News* newspaper was commonly referred to as "MTO News" instead of the correct name listed on the flag of the publication. The elimination of this confusion would increase both employee recognition of these publications and their effectiveness.
A final point should be noted about the latest means of communicating to employees through video. *Spectrum*, the quarterly video magazine, seems to have earned itself quite a favorable reputation. Most employees knew of it and had something favorable to say about it. People want a change from reading so much information every day and enjoy this passive medium as a means to learn of news within the company. Leaving one's duties for a short time to watch the scheduled showings of *Spectrum* is a welcome break for many employees.

The discrepancy in the employees' opinions of the company image within the community and its progression over the last five years points to an area that might merit further research. The company's community-related image is important to the company and is a prime concern to its Public Affairs Department. The reasons for the diverse responses of the employees cannot be determined from this survey, but further research in this area may prove to be beneficial.

The inconsistency of the results about employees' attitudes toward the company is probably due to the subjective nature of this question. GTE's image is not the only factor in an employee's attitude which is derived to a greater degree from his or her personal job satisfaction.

The only significant difference between the answers of the management and hourly employees concerned the overall awareness of the public affairs functions. In this area, management was much more familiar with the functions performed. In the
rest of the areas covered by the survey, however, the answers were distributed evenly. This may reflect the fact that the management surveyed were mostly middle, rather than upper management in the company.

In summary, the GTE employees have a general but inconsistent awareness of the Public Affairs Department. Their perceptions are not totally accurate, yet they are incomplete and differ among everyone. The Public Affairs Department is not designed to promote itself, however, it would be beneficial if the employees were given a clear description of their purpose and function. This would promote a better understanding among all the employees and may in turn, enhance the effectiveness of efforts in the Public Affairs Department.
WORKS CITED


Appendices
GTE Midwestern Telephone Operations is a leading provider of telecommunications products and services to customers throughout Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin. MTO's operating territory also includes General of the Midwest, which operates in Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri and Minnesota.

The largest of GTE's telephone operating groups, MTO's operating companies produced revenues of nearly $1.9 billion in 1983, and have more than 21,600 employees. The seven telephone operating companies serve more than 3 million customer lines in some 1,330 exchanges throughout 3,500 communities.

MTO covers 102,360 square miles stretching from Canada to the Mason-Dixon Line and from the Great Plains to the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1983, MTO had total assets of nearly $4.2 billion and consolidated net income of $256 million.

September 1984
General Telephone Company of Indiana, Inc. serves 515,100 customer lines and operates in 113 exchanges and provides staff support for Garrett Telephone Co., Garrett, Ind. The combined companies provide local telephone services to 417 communities in 47 of 92 counties.

Fort Wayne, located in the northeastern division, is the largest exchange and serves as the Indiana operation's state headquarters.

General of Indiana has more than 5,200 employees working in the state's four divisions, headquartered in Fort Wayne, Richmond, Terre Haute and Elkhart.

The combined companies' net income for 1984 was $73.2 million.
Date: March 7, 1988

Subject: PUBLIC AFFAIRS SURVEY

From: M. F. Eichar (IFAPD)

To: J. J. Gorney (IFACA)
    L. A. Spindler (IGAOB)
    J. P. Turk (IFGDG)

Susan Knipstein, a senior at Ball State University, is doing a small study on employee perception of Public Affairs activities. She would like to interview a cross section of our employees for about half-an-hour the week of March 14 or March 25.

I would ask that you select three management and three hourly employees whom you feel are representative of the employees who work at your location. If you would provide me with their names, job titles and work telephone numbers, Susan will contact them to arrange a time for the interview. You might also tell these employees that some of them will be used as alternates and may not be contacted at all.

I appreciate your help in this project and would ask you to please let me have your information by March 9. If you have any questions, please call Bruce Kotchey at 461-3347.

M. FLORENCE EICHAR
State Director-Public Affairs

MFE:mc

cc: G. F. Gawronski (IFAEI)
    W. W. Williams (IFAOA)
    L. E. Voyles (IFA7A)
TO: Flo Eichar

FROM: Susan Knipstein

RE: Thesis project/ employee survey

DATE: February 23, 1988

I am sending a copy of the employee survey with the revisions and additions we discussed last week. Please read through it and let me know if you have any additional corrections or suggestions.

After completing the survey with an employee, I would also like to ask a few open-ended questions to stimulate general discussion and feedback. I was thinking these questions should be something like "How do you think the Public Affairs Department could be improved?" or "What do you think the main purpose of Public Affairs is?"

I will be returning from vacation on March 5 and will get in touch with you during the following week. At that time we can discuss any questions you may have about the survey and the particulars of scheduling the interviews.

Once again I want to thank you for your time and assistance with this project. I appreciate it!
Appendix C
THE INTERNAL PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AT GTE

Survey # _______ Time: _______

1. Name the functions you believe are performed in the Public Affairs Department of GTE.

___ Community Affairs ___ Customer Service
___External Communication ___ Personnel
___Employee Communications ___ Annual Report
___Governmental Affairs ___ Advertising
___Consumer Affairs
___ Others ________________

2. Were you also aware that public affairs is responsible for:
(Name those not mentioned above)

y / n Community Affairs
y / n External Communication
y / n Employee Communications
y / n Governmental Affairs
y / n Consumer Affairs

[Hand them list]

3. Here is a list of five functions performed by the public affairs department. Which of these do consider to be the most important?

___ Community Affairs
___ External Communications (media & customers)
___ Employee Communications
___ Governmental Affairs
___ Consumer Affairs

4. Which of the same five functions do you consider to be the least important?

___ Community Affairs
___ External Communications (media & customers)
___ Employee Communications
___ Governmental Affairs
___ Consumer Affairs
Community Affairs

5. I'm going to read you a list of special events in the Fort Wayne community. Following each event I will ask if you were aware of the event, if you were aware that GTE was involved with the event and finally, if you have had personal contact with the event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Aware of event</th>
<th>Aware of GTE inv.</th>
<th>Personal Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fantastic Friday (Adopt a School)</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Fort Wayne Minority School</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Salute (Friday night dinner)</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Greenway Triathalon</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace &amp; Understanding Festival</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCH Historic Preservation Awards</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Initiative Program</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Rivers Festival Parade -- Helium Balloon Giveaway</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts Foundation Renaissance Campaign</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youtheater (Peter Pan)</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March of Dimes Walkathon</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. Bikeathon</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Olympics</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Water Games</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employee Communications

6. Now I'd like to move on to employee communications. Can you name any communication efforts coming from the company that you have contact with?

- FYI weekly bulletins
- GTE North News
- GTE North News (MTO Newspaper)
- GTE Together
- Hot Topics
- Spectrum
- Other ________________________________
7. I'm going to read you a list of different types of communication. Again, I will ask if you were aware of the communication, if you were aware Public Affairs was responsible for it and if you have had personal contact with this communication.

(A) **Internal Communications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Aware of Comm.</th>
<th>Aware of P.A. inv.</th>
<th>Read/Use Regularly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FYI weekly bulletins (on boards &amp; racks)</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE North News (posted on boards)</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Topics (supervisors only)</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE North News (MTO Newspaper)</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE Together</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectrum (quarterly video magazine)</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
<td>y / n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(B) **External Communications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Read/Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer bill inserts</td>
<td>y/n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printed messages on customer bills</td>
<td>y/n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate case information in the media</td>
<td>y/n</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Of all your sources of information from the company, where do you get the best information?

- ____FYI weekly bulletins
- ____GTE North News Ma (MTO Newspaper)
- ____GTE Together
- ____Supervisor
- ____Other ______________________

[Hand them list if answer is other than a publication]

9. Now, here is a list of the communication vehicles we discussed earlier. Of these, where do you get your best information from the company?

- ____FYI weekly bulletins
- ____GTE North News
- ____GTE North News (MTO Newspaper)
- ____Hot Topics
- ____GTE Together
- ____Spectrum
- ____Co-workers
- ____Other ______________________
[Now I'm going to ask you to rate some things on a scale of 1 - 5 where five is very important and one is not very important]

10. Using this scale, tell me how important you think it is that GTE have a Public Affairs Department? (Remember that 5 is very important and 1 is not very important).

11. How important is it for GTE's employees to be involved with the community?

12. How important is it for GTE to financially support community programs?

13. How important is it that GTE keep the local TV and radio stations informed about issues concerning the company?

14. How important is it that GTE advertise locally?

15. How important is it that GTE communicate with its employees?

16. How important are GTE's relations with the state and federal legislative bodies?
[How long have you lived in Fort Wayne?]

[Now I'm going to ask you to rate a few more things on another five point scale, but now let 5 mean very good and 1 mean very bad.]

17. Think back to five years ago and rate the image you believe the company had at that time within the community. (Remember that 5 is a very good image and 1 is a very poor image).

18. Now rate the image you believe the company has today.

19. Rate the employee's attitude toward their company as you believe it was five years ago. Again 5 is a very good attitude and 4 is a very poor one.

20. Rate the attitude you believe employees have toward their company today.

21. In your estimation, how many people are employed in the Public Affairs Department?

22. Do you feel you have sufficient information about what the Public Affairs Department does? y / n

23. [If no] What would be the best way for you to receive more information about the Public Affairs Department?
[Now I need to get a little background information, and want to let you know that this information or your name will not be used my the final paper]

24. What is your job title? __________________________

25. How long have you been with GTE? ________ years

26. How many different positions have you held within the company? ___

27. How long have you lived in Fort Wayne? ________ years

28. How much education have you completed?
   ___High school diploma       ___Some college
   ___College degree           ___Some graduate work
   ___Graduate degree         ___More than one graduate degree

29. Is your age:
   _____ Under 25          _____ 25 - 35
   _____ 35 - 45           _____ 45 and up
   Sex:  M / F

30. Now I'd like to finish the survey with a two short discussion questions to get your input. The first is: What do you feel is the main purpose for having a public affairs department?

31. In what ways do you think the Public Affairs Department could be improved?
APPENDIX D

SURVEY RESULTS

---

Key: 
- #% = total percentage of answers given
- **Bold** = management answers
- **Normal** = hourly employee answers
- *** = a breakdown between management and hourly employees is not included

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1. Name the functions you believe are performed in the Public Affairs Department of GTE.

80% 8,4  External Communication  
53% 6,2  Community Affairs  
46% 4,3  Employee Communications  
20% 2,1  Governmental Affairs  
0,0  Consumer Affairs  
Others: Bulletins, fundraising, maintaining image, renting video equipment.

2. Were you also aware that public affairs is responsible for:  
(Name those not mentioned above)

Y / N***

11 / 3  Consumer Affairs  
7 / 2  Community Affairs  
5 / 3  Employee Communications  
5 / 7  Governmental Affairs  
2 / 0  External Communication

3. Here is a list of five functions performed by the public affairs department. Which of these do consider to be the most important?

46% 3,4  External Communications (media & customers)  
26% 3,1  Employee Communications  
13% 0,2  Consumer Affairs  
6% 1,0  Community Affairs  
6% 1,0  Governmental Affairs
4. Which of the same five functions do you consider to be the least important?

33% 2,3 Community Affairs
26% 4,0 Consumer Affairs
13% 2,0 External Communications (media & customers)
13% 0,3 Governmental Affairs
6% 0,1 Employee Communications

Community Affairs

5. I'm going to read you a list of special events in the Fort Wayne community. Following each event I will ask if you were aware of the event, if you were aware that GTE was involved with the event and finally, if you have had personal contact with the event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Aware of event</th>
<th>Aware of GTE inv.</th>
<th>Personal Contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Olympics</td>
<td>14 / 1</td>
<td>12 / 2</td>
<td>2 / 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March of Dimes Walkathon</td>
<td>14 / 1</td>
<td>14 / 1</td>
<td>7 / 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts Foundation Renaissance Campaign</td>
<td>13 / 2</td>
<td>13 / 0</td>
<td>1 / 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. Bikeathon</td>
<td>12 / 3</td>
<td>9 / 3</td>
<td>3 / 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Greenway Triathalon</td>
<td>11 / 4</td>
<td>10 / 1</td>
<td>2 / 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Water Games</td>
<td>11 / 4</td>
<td>7 / 5</td>
<td>1 / 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer Initiative Program</td>
<td>10 / 5</td>
<td>10 / 0</td>
<td>1 / 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Rivers Festival Parade -- Helium</td>
<td>8 / 7</td>
<td>3 / 5</td>
<td>0 / 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balloon Giveaway</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fantastic Friday (Adopt a School)</td>
<td>7 / 8</td>
<td>7 / 0</td>
<td>0 / 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCH Historic Preservation Awards</td>
<td>7 / 8</td>
<td>2 / 5</td>
<td>0 / 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamber of Commerce's Legislative Salute</td>
<td>5 / 10</td>
<td>2 / 1</td>
<td>0 / 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Friday night dinner)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youtheater (Peter Pan)</td>
<td>4 / 10</td>
<td>2 / 2</td>
<td>0 / 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Fort Wayne Minority School</td>
<td>3 / 12</td>
<td>2 / 1</td>
<td>0 / 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peace &amp; Understanding Festival</td>
<td>0 / 15</td>
<td>0 / 0</td>
<td>0 / 0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Now I'd like to move on to employee communications. Can you name any communication efforts coming from the company that you have regular contact with?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>7,8</td>
<td>FYI weekly bulletins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>4,5</td>
<td>GTE North News (MTO Newspaper)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0,1</td>
<td>GTE North News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0,1</td>
<td>GTE Together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1,0</td>
<td>Spectrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>Hot Topics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. I'm going to read you a list of different types of communication. Again, I will ask if you were aware of the communication, if you were aware Public Affairs was responsible for it and if you usually read it on a regular basis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Aware of Comm.</th>
<th>Aware of P.A. inv.</th>
<th>Read/Use Regularly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FYI weekly bulletins (on boards &amp; racks)</td>
<td>15/0</td>
<td>13/2</td>
<td>14/1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spectrum (quarterly video magazine)</td>
<td>15/0</td>
<td>12/3</td>
<td>13/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE North News (MTO Newspaper)</td>
<td>15/0</td>
<td>11/4</td>
<td>12/3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE Together</td>
<td>14/1</td>
<td>10/4</td>
<td>10/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTE North News (posted on boards)</td>
<td>13/2</td>
<td>9/4</td>
<td>13/0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Topics (supervisors only)</td>
<td>7/8</td>
<td>4/3</td>
<td>5/2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Of all your sources of information from the company, where do you get the best information?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
<td>4,1</td>
<td>FYI weekly bulletins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>GTE North News</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13%</td>
<td>0,2</td>
<td>Co-workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1,0</td>
<td>GTE North News (MTO Newspaper)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0,1</td>
<td>Spectrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-office memos, inter-departmental newsletters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Now, here is a list of the communication vehicles we discussed earlier. Of these, where do you get your best information from the company?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Vehicle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>FYI weekly bulletins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>GTE North News (MTO Newspaper)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>GTE North News</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. How important do you think it is that GTE have a Public Affairs Department?

Not very important | Very important
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
0,0 | 1,0 | 0,1 | 1,0 | 6,6
80%

11. How important is it for GTE's employees to be involved with the community?

Not very important | Very important
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
0,0 | 1,1 | 1,1 | 6,4 | 1,2
66%

12. How important is it for GTE to financially support community programs?

Not very important | Very important
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
0,0 | 0,0 | 2,1 | 5,2 | 1,4
46%

13. How important is it that GTE keep the local TV, radio stations and newspapers informed about issues concerning the company?

Not very important | Very important
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
0,0 | 0,1 | 4,0 | 2,0 | 3,5
53%

14. How important is it that GTE advertise locally?

Not very important | Very important
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
1,0 | 0,0 | 3,1 | 1,1 | 4,4
53%

15. How important is it that GTE communicate with its employees?

Not very important | Very important
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 0,0 | 8,7
100%

16. How important are GTE's relations with the state and federal legislative bodies?

Not very important | Very important
1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5
0,0 | 0,0 | 0,2 | 0,0 | 8,5
86%
[These answers were also ranked on a five-point scale where five is very good and one is very bad. Note: Only those employees who lived in Fort Wayne longer than five years answered these questions.]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17. Think back to five years ago and rate the image you believe the company had at that time within the community.</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>2,1</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>0,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Now rate the image you believe the company has today.</td>
<td>1,0</td>
<td>0,3</td>
<td>4,2</td>
<td>3,0</td>
<td>0,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Rate the employee's attitude toward their company as you believe it was five years ago. Again 5 is a very good attitude and 4 is a very poor one.</td>
<td>0,2</td>
<td>3,1</td>
<td>1,0</td>
<td>4,1</td>
<td>0,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Rate the attitude you believe employees have toward their company today.</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>1,0</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>4,3</td>
<td>0,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. In your estimation, how many people are employed in the Public Affairs Department?</td>
<td>3 said &quot;5&quot;</td>
<td>4 said &quot;6&quot;</td>
<td>1 said &quot;7&quot;</td>
<td>3 said &quot;10&quot;</td>
<td>Others said &quot;25, 200 &amp; 500&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Do you feel you have sufficient information about what the Public Affairs Department does?</td>
<td>11 or 73% said &quot;yes&quot;</td>
<td>4 or 27% said &quot;no&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. [If no] What would be the best way for you to receive more information about the Public Affairs Department? The four employees who answered no said they would like to receive information via updates of public affairs activities in the weekly bulletins, or through related memos or bulletin board postings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Background Information


25. Length of time with GTE: Overall average: 13 years
   Management average: 16.7 years
   Hourly average: 8.7 years

26. Number of positions held within the company:
   Overall average: 5.1
   Management average: 7
   Hourly average: 3

27. Length of time in Fort Wayne:
   Overall average: 15
   Management average: 18
   Hourly average: 11

28. Amount of education completed:
   1,2 High school diploma
   3,0 College degree
   4,4 Some college
   0,0 Graduate degree
   0,0 Some graduate work
   0,0 More than one graduate degree

29. Age:  5,0 25 - 35
         8,2 35 - 45

   Sex:  5,2 Male
         3,4 Female

30. Now I'd like to finish the survey with a two short discussion questions to get your input. The first is: What do you feel is the main purpose for having a public affairs department?

   The answers to this question primarily reflected the responses given in question number one. They centered around the aspect of maintaining a good image for the company and being the communicator between the company and the public.
31. In what ways do you think the Public Affairs Department could be improved?

The majority of employees interviewed gave this question some thought and then replied that they had no further suggestions. A few, however, did have some input and their ideas follow:

• Improve the communication about company policy. It is usually confusing material and written in a way that's difficult to understand.

• Make the information in employee communications, especially the FYI Bulletins, more timely. This respondent felt she often received information after the fact.

• Advertise more locally in the media such as radio and TV.

• Distribute a list of the personnel in the Public Affairs Department and their respective responsibilities. This would provide an information source about who to contact when employees have a particular need or item of information.

• Have representatives of the Public Affairs Department personally contact employee groups on a more frequent basis.