

The Student Public Relations Agency  
LIMITED EDITION

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

by

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### THESIS STATEMENT

The student agency is a valuable asset to the public relations and advertising students. The purpose of this thesis is to explain why Ball State University's student agency, Limited Edition, exists and how it can be improved to best benefit the staff members.

The Student Agency  
LIMITED EDITION

- I. Public Relations Professionals Speak
  - A. The need for skills development
  - B. The need for practical experience
  - C. The student agency's usefulness
  
- II. Limited Edition
  - A. Description
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"In 1980 Public Relations education continued its trend toward a more theoretical approach, but with greater emphasis on developing skills and techniques through projects; active participation of a growing number of PRSSA chapters and their student-run agencies; Pro-am, pairing student with practitioner; and a greater availability of internships." (Public Relations Review, Spring 1984, p.18).

Developing skills and techniques and getting hands-on experience are the two keys to landing a first public relations job. Professionals and professors alike will tell any student that.

Betsy Ann Plank, APR, assistant vice president, corporate programming and planning, Illinois Bell Telephone Co. and a past national president for PRSA, said, "I find the weakness in those (students) who haven't bothered to study and practice for the field. Take every opportunity for internships. When they are sparse, do volunteer work in communications. That can be the critical difference for you in the massive and keen competition for entry-level jobs." (Communication World, Sept. 1984, p. 38-39).

And Myra L. Kruger, ABC, regional communications manager, Towers, Perrin, Forster, & Crosby, Chicago and chairman IABC, added, "I see the biggest weaknesses of entry-level persons in public relations are the lack of business knowledge, finance and economic training and general management skills. Students need to supplement their education with practical experience before entering the field. Do internships, freelance, anything to get that experience." (Ibid).

Barbara W. Hunter, APR, president, Dudley-Anderson-Yutzy Public Relations, Inc., New York and national president of PRSA, said, "Gain as much practical experience as possible along the way." (Ibid).

Gaining that experience at school can be difficult, but at Ball State University public relations students have the opportunity to work in Limited Edition.

Limited Edition is one of few student-operated public relations and advertising agencies in the nation. The agency exists as a special project of PRaxis, Ball State's umbrella organization for its chapters of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) and the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA).

In the past few years the agency has grown away from PRaxis into an identity of its own. And now many members of Limited Edition are not members of PRaxis. The agency was originally established to provide PRaxis members with practical public relations and advertising experience and give these staff members a better picture of the skills needed for careers in these fields.

But opening the agency to all interested and qualified students has helped the agency to attract people that will contribute to the success of the agency. This has also helped the agency to grow to as many as 50 staff members at one time.

This is also a change from the original concept of Limited Edition. The name was chosen because it suggested only a limited number of students were chosen to serve in the agency on the basis of their intelligence, talent and ambition.

In the spring of 1976 Limited Edition was formed. Several students in public relations had expressed an interest in forming a student agency so they could receive the practical experience that could not be gained in the classroom. They found several not-for-profit organizations that would be willing to pay a fee for students to do public relations work for them.

The agency's facilities have improved tremendously over the years. The first location was one half of a basement in one of the university's old houses on Talley Street. The first staff, three unpaid students, weathered the basement that flooded when it rained, the lack of a phone, and using an old chest of drawers for a file cabinet. They made do because they knew what they were doing was important to their future and the future of many students to come.

In 1977 the agency moved to an office in the Journalism Department when the house was torn down. In 1978 they were moved into a production office. The director of the agency became a paid staff member in 1979. And in 1980 the agency expanded to include advertising and five paid staff members: Executive Director, Public Relations/Personnel Director, Advertising Director, Creative Director, and Staff Accountant.

From year to year since 1980, the number of paid staff has changed. For two years there were two Public Relations Directors, and this past year and for next year no Creative Director was chosen. It depends on how many qualified students apply for the positions and the money available for scholarships for directors.

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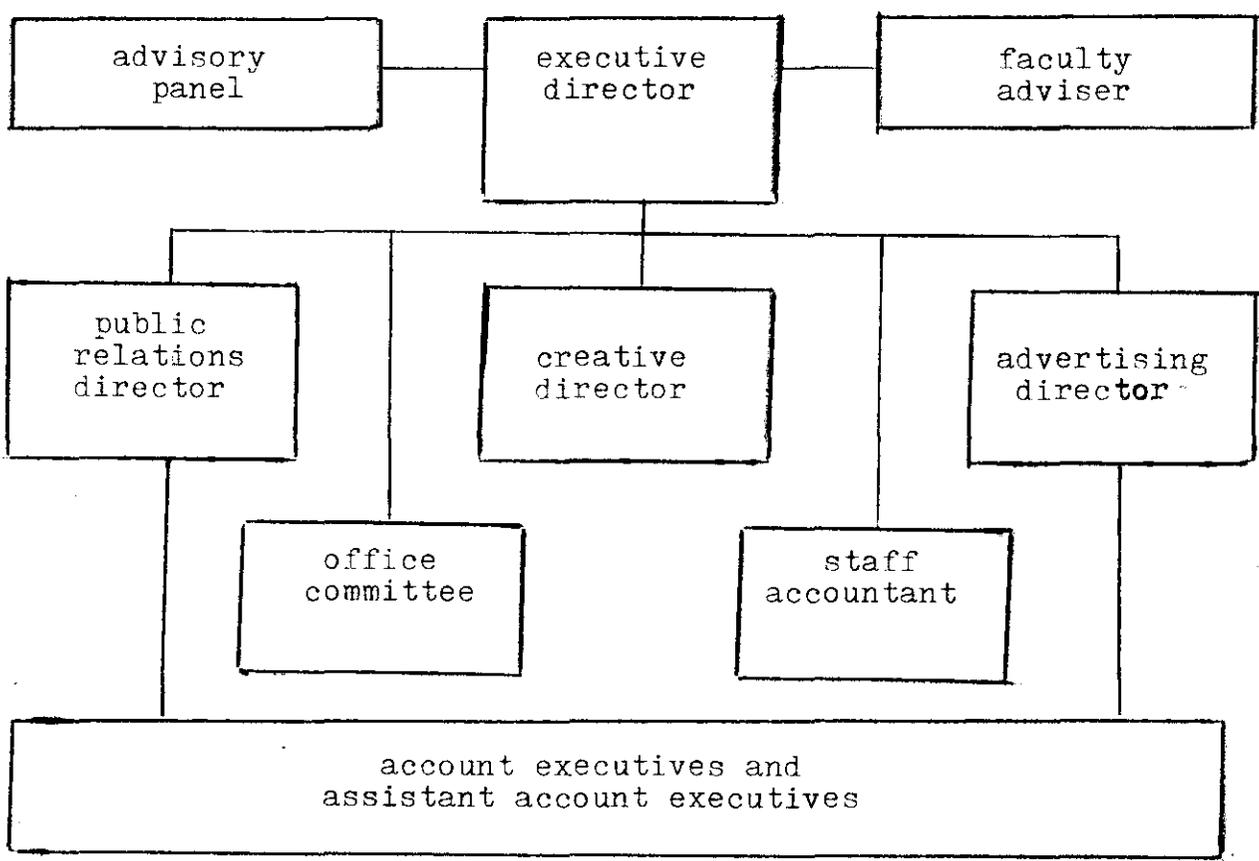
Limited Edition benefits both the student members and the clients. This is accomplished through the following list of

Agency objectives:

- 1) To provide out-of-classroom educational experience for students.
- 2) To meet the needs of the client.
- 3) To operate from September to May.
- 4) To provide orientation and workshops for staff members.
- 5) To have goals and objectives reviewed yearly for the agency and each client.
- 6) To raise money through client fees for the Public Relations scholarship fund.
- 7) To provide visits to professional operations (i.e. printing operations and advertising agencies).

\* \* \* \* \*

The organizational chart of the agency



Each position in Limited Edition has specific job requirements, but in addition, directors and account executives have the opportunity to develop their abilities in:

- 1) supervising others harmoniously and effectively;
- 2) communicating effectively horizontally and vertically in an organizational structure (see chart, p. 4);
- 3) organizing work activities;
- 4) planning effectively;
- 5) establishing sound priorities;
- 6) learning to accept the responsibility for mistakes without passing the buck;
- 7) providing themselves with continual self-evaluation;
- 8) learning to accept criticism and to learn from it and from their own mistakes. (Educational Objectives of Student Agencies, p. 2).

Student Agencies, p. 2).

#### Job descriptions

The EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR is responsible for the overall programs and direction, for following and updating long-term goals and objectives, and for providing educational programs as needed to update and improve staff skills. The other directors assist with this function.

This director also makes contacts or assigns contacts to obtain clients. Recruitment of clients should be planned with an eye to the types of services the agency needs in order to allow students a wide variety of skill opportunities.

Other responsibilities are to conduct weekly executive meetings with the directors and financial consultant to learn the progress of accounts and to discuss agency direction, problems, and its future; to make monthly visits with clients to determine

whether the agency is meeting client goals; and to be responsible for the financial operations of the agency with the advice of the staff accountant.

The Executive Director should hold monthly meetings with agency staff members in order to provide general information about the agency and to provide brief educational programs about current problems or general knowledge (goal setting, budget presentation and preparation, market research, media usage, etc.).

Assigning accounts each spring and fall to account executives, developing specific goals and objectives for the position, and guiding the executive committee in the formulation and production of an agency brochure, annual report, slide show, and new client presentations are also part of the Executive Director's job.

The responsibilities of the PUBLIC RELATIONS/PERSONNEL DIRECTOR: All accounts which are primarily public relations in nature will be assigned to this director. He or she is responsible for informal weekly meetings with Account Executives to determine account progress and surface potential problems and for presenting at each weekly executive meeting pertinent information on the progress and problems of each account. He or she offers advice and direction as needed for each Account Executive. If unable to provide help, he or she should assist the Account Executive in finding where to obtain this help.

Responsibility for the quarterly and yearly update of the budget for all accounts falls under this position. He or she presents the budget update to the Executive Director and Staff Accountant at the beginning of each quarter.

Other requirements include working on special projects as assigned by the Executive Director, developing specific goals and objectives for the job at the beginning of the year, and developing and collecting of goals and objectives and timetables with Account Executives for each client during the specified campaign length.

The Public Relations Director must also inform the Executive Director of the status of the accounts before monthly client visitations.

PERSONNEL responsibilities include preparing and sending releases on all staff to hometown newspapers upon their joining the agency and agency recognition of outstanding staff members.

He or she oversees and coordinates the Limited Edition newsletter that functions as an internal communications device among the staff, sends the agency newsletter to clients, potential clients, and others interested in the agency.

The Public Relations Director coordinates the Account Assistants and additional staff as a unit, promoting their importance and providing additional training in skills not required through accounts and makes sure examples of all work completed for clients are secured for the agency's permanent files.

The ADVERTISING DIRECTOR is responsible for making contacts or assigning contacts to obtain advertising clients. Recruitment of clients should be planned with an eye on the types of services the agency needs.

All accounts primarily advertising in nature will be assigned to the Advertising Director. He or she is responsible for

informal meetings with Account Executives to determine account progress and surface potential problems for each account.

The Advertising Director offers advice and direction as needed for each account executive, and if unable to provide help, assists the Account Executive in finding where to obtain this help. Also responsibility for the yearly and quarterly update of the budget for all advertising accounts belongs to this director. He or she presents to the Executive Director and Staff Accountant at the beginning of each quarter this information.

He or she works on special projects as assigned by the agency director, develops specific goals and objectives for the job at the beginning of the year, and assists the advertising Account Executives in developing advertising ideas, ads, and advertising campaigns. The Advertising Director suggests ideas for advertising in the public relations accounts and assists public relations Account Executives with advertising problems.

The CREATIVE DIRECTOR is someone who is knowledgeable of production mechanics, typesetting, photography utilization, special events communications tools, print shop necessities and office supplies so all accounts can continue to work efficiently.

The Creative Director should heighten the overall impact of the account communication tools and consult with all the Account Executives so that an effective message is produced which will satisfy the needs of that client.

Personnel under the Creative Director will be involved in designing and refining logos, creating new formats for existing communication tools, maintain current photo and slide files, coordinate the visual needs for agency presentations, advise

accounts about type specifications, paper and color, create a unifying element or theme throughout account projects so that the message might be more coherent, and research specialty communications tools for special events planning.

Specifics include: (1) All typesetting and production done by the Daily News Production must be handled between the Creative Director and the Production Department. (2) All typesetting must be approved by the Creative Director and/or one of the directors. (3) All graphics assignments will be turned into the Creative Director and he or she will in turn appoint the appropriate personnel to accomplish the task.

The STAFF ACCOUNTANT will establish monthly and annual budget formats for the agency, devise a reporting system for spending within each account, and will develop the cash analysis flow. He or she is responsible for analyzing the cash flow and budget each quarter and analyzing account expenses in relation to income to determine if fees are high enough or if the educational value from the account justifies a low financial return.

Establishing charge accounts with creditors of the Executive Director's choice, making all deposits to the Bursar's office, writing all checks and processing them through proper channels, and keeping university cash records and general journal records are all part of the Accountant's job.

He must also make a monthly balance sheet and income statement and send out all monthly billings on the first day of the following month.

The PUBLIC RELATIONS ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE is responsible for coordinating all activities relating to the account and personal

contact with the client. With the help of the Public Relations Director, he or she should develop long-range goals, strategy, budget, assignments and timetables for the account.

Provide weekly updates of the account to respective director, as needed consult specialists for advice in specific problems, present monthly budget and report statements to the director, turn in monthly expenses, and bring all creative assignments to the Creative Director for authorization of project ideas and for quality control measures are all part of the Account Executive's responsibilities.

The ADVERTISING ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE is responsible for working with advertising clients in developing advertising campaigns and advertising designs, for providing a weekly update of account status to the Advertising Director, for presenting advertising timetables to the client and Advertising Director, and is responsible for submitting all materials prepared for the client into the agency files.

The ADVISORY PANEL consists of professional counselors, faculty and professionals used by the agency personnel during the year for special advice needed for individual projects. The panel will consist of members from the areas noted: market research, advertising, public relations, fundraising, media, audio visuals, photography, finance, and management.

These professionals will be asked by the Faculty Advisers to serve on the panel for one year with no pay. Selection will be in April of each year. The panel members will be approached only by a member of the Executive Committee after it has been

determined that advice is needed and the panel members will be utilized for continuing education programs such as workshops and staff meetings.

The FACULTY ADVISERS will advise and assist the Limited Edition Executive Committee, provide continuity, aid with the development of goals and objectives, advise students in seeking and developing new clients, and meet regularly with the Executive Director in an advisory capacity.

They will also serve on the Selection Committee and Executive Committee, arrange for members of the Executive Committee to visit advertising and public relations agencies to better understand their operations, and select the Advisory Panel.

#### Evaluating objectives

In order to accomplish the agency's objectives, all the staff members, the advisory panel, and the faculty advisers must work together and do their share. Following is a summation of Limited Edition's objectives and how the agency has/has not met these objectives:

(1) To provide out of classroom experience for students. This objective has been met, only because any practical experience outside the classroom is good for the student. Only so much can be taught in class; and these things must be practiced. Some experience, such as client relationships with a staff member and business etiquette, cannot be taught in class. These must be gained through actual doing. The agency provides both practice for class-learned skills and the opportunity to learn other valuable skills.

(2) To meet the needs of the client. This objective has not been completely fulfilled in some cases. Many Account Executives fail to research the client and find out his needs and how the agency can best serve the client. The Account Executive does just the minimum the client wants done--a newsletter, a brochure, or letterhead. The work is being done and done well, but a total campaign is not. The client's organization or product is not being promoted or advertised to the fullest. The potential is not reached. It is up to the Account Executive, the expert in this case, to see that all resources possible are tapped for the client. It hurts both in the long run.

(3) To operate from September to May. It would be better for many clients to have year-around service. Some clients struggle putting their newsletters together in the summer, and others are rushed to get the summer publication done before classes end. If some staff were attending summer sessions or lived in the area, it would be feasible to provide limited services to the clients that needed them. The Daily News publishes during the summer, so it would be viable for the agency to do so, too. This would give some staff director experience, help get the agency ready for fall, and benefit the clients. The agency could use the extra income.

(4) To provide orientation and workshops for staff members. The agency is definitely lacking in this area. This past year there was no formal workshop for the new staff members. Most were taught typesetting, office policies, and paste up one-on-one with a director or an experienced staff member. There was no formal "initiation" into the agency so the members could learn

the history of the agency, its policies, and about the clients and running of the office. There were no workshops during the year also, i.e. photography, graphics, typesetting. This was done in some past years. Since it is an objective of the agency, this should be done in order to benefit the staff.

(5) To have goals and objectives reviewed yearly for the agency and each client. This is done for the most part for each client. The goals and objectives are set in the spring and reviewed in the form of the campaign summary in the following spring. It is effective; the account people formally present their campaigns and the Executive Committee are able to see the work of the account people. On the other hand, no goals and objectives were set for the agency for the 1984-85 school year except to get out of debt. That one has been accomplished, but evaluating the year will be more difficult for the Executive Committee. And the new committee will not have any information and figures on which to base their goals and objectives.

The student agency at Northern Illinois University, Contact Communications, sets long-range, intermediate-range, and short-range goals each year. These are concrete, valid, and attainable. The directors have something in black and white to evaluate the agency's performance at the end of the year. These can also be distributed to each member, so he or she can see his or her part in meeting the agency's goals. It gives the members direction.

This objective of Limited Edition most definitely should be examined and next year's Executive Committee should strive to set goals and objectives for the agency.

(6) To raise money for the Public Relations Scholarship Fund through client fees. This is where the bulk of the money Limited Edition makes goes. The scholarships for the directors, their "pay," come out of the income of the agency. This means the agency starts off each year in the hole, and it must try to make up that difference throughout the year. Some years the agency makes up that difference and some years it does not. Because of the \$500 scholarship each director receives, the agency does not make enough money above that to buy better equipment and other supplies, and it cannot pay other staff.

(7) To provide visits to professional operations. This objective has not been utilized well. In the past two years, only two businesses have been visited--two years ago a visit to Warner Press in Anderson and this past year a visit to J. Allan Rent Advertising, Inc., in Muncie. There are many operations here in Muncie that could be visited. These offer opportunities for staff members to learn more about printing, agency operations, and graphics.

What staff learn/do \* \* \* \* \*

Learning is an important process, and the staff members do learn a variety of things in the agency. They learn how to typeset copy and headlines, how to do paste up, how to "spec" type, how to deal with deadline pressure, how to crop photos, and how to write in a variety of styles (i.e. news, feature, press releases).

They also learn about time management, commitment, organization, and finding information. Many of the things the staff learn

are intangible, yet they are all a part of the learning process and benefits of working in Limited Edition.

The job descriptions give the "ideal" situation for each position, but here are the specifics each type of staff member does.

The RESUME STAFF spec, typeset, and paste up resumes. They average five each week. The resume service coordinator works with the printer to get the prices and details on the paper and printing. He or she tries to get a package deal by giving one printer all the agency's business. The coordinator helps set the format of the service, develop order forms, decide on prices and packages that Limited Edition will offer. He or she oversees the entire resume service process.

The PUBLIC RELATIONS STAFF do a wide range of activities. Included are some or all of the following: writing, editing, design, and paste up of newsletters and brochures; designing letterhead, business cards, logos; writing and sending out press releases; planning and writing copy for slide shows, presentations; designing buttons and posters.

The ADVERTISING STAFF work on obtaining clients as well as planning and executing advertising campaigns, designing ads, and doing ad-related promotions.

Basing Limited Edition's activities on a professional agency, Ruder Finn & Rotman, Inc., there are many services that Limited Edition does not offer or do. Some it does not because no one is qualified, but others it could do, but the possibilities have not been explored.

The following is a list of the elements that Ruder Finn & Rotman, Inc. considers when planning a public relations program:

- (1) Counseling and planning
  - a. Regular review and planning meetings with management
  - b. Short- and long-term proactive communications program planning and budgeting
  - c. Audits to determine effectiveness of existing programs and opportunities for new ones
  - d. Attitude and perception research of market, financial and public sectors
- (2) Press Releases
  - a. Press kits
  - b. Publicity
  - c. Corporate news
    1. Press conferences
    2. Special events
- (3) Marketing Communications
  - a. Product selling literature
  - b. Sales support materials and activities
    1. Case histories
    2. Audiovisual materials
    3. Trade show coordination
  - c. Product advertising and promotion
    1. Development of trade ads and promotions
    2. Direct mail programs
  - d. Marketing research
- (4) Technological support
  - a. User manuals
  - b. Service manuals
  - c. Training aids
  - d. Educational seminars
- (5) Corporate Communications
  - a. Employee communications programs
  - b. Speaking engagements and public appearance training
  - c. Newsletters
  - d. Community and labor relations materials
- (6) Financial Relations
  - a. Annual and quarterly reports
  - b. Corporate advertising
  - c. Initial public offering strategies
- (7) Communication Arts Design and Direction
  - a. Comprehensive graphic design and print production
  - b. Audio-visual program production
  - c. Exhibit and display design

Everything that a staff does in Limited Edition helps him or her to gain skills for an internship and/or first job. Dr. Melvin L. Sharpe, faculty adviser for Limited Edition, commented, "Limited Edition has a history of performance based on an attempt to maintain as professional of an approach as possible in the operation of the agency.

"Students are expected to interview dressed in appropriate business attire with resumes and portfolios and interviewees and interviewers alike approach the process with the seriousness of a job interview." (Educational Objectives of Student Agencies).

The skills they learn can be seen in the students' portfolios and resumes. It shows the actual public relations and advertising work that the students have done.

It is this actual experience that will often give the staff members an edge when interviewing for a job or internship and when they have to do this work in their job. Debbie Leak, Limited Edition's first Executive Director, said, "It (Limited Edition) gives the student a natural edge when entering the job market. The organizational skills I mastered while directing the agency have assisted me in coping with my present job--editor of Campus Update." (Limited Edition Newsletter, Feb. 1982).

Some staff members leave Limited Edition with more experience and portfolio material than others. It is up to the staff member to use the opportunity to the fullest. If one has an account that is not too active, there are plenty of projects to work on within the agency. The student must ask to do things and follow through with them. It is also the student's responsibility to do

the best quality work possible. For it is not just the work, but the quality of the work, that he or she will be judged on in an interview.

Dave Swincher, former director, commented, "Without a doubt, my previous experience with Limited Edition has been beneficial to my professional career. It provided me with the hands on experience needed to deal with all types of people."

Other ways in which Limited Edition helps a student prepare for a job is the management experience one receives as a director. This helps a student grow, learn more about the agency and public relations, and become a leader. Going through interviews, account reviews, and campaign summaries lets the student learn how to act in a more professional manner and how to deal with stressful situations.

Although Limited Edition offers much to a public relations or advertising student, the agency has its shortcomings.

(1) Some accounts do not offer a variety of good experience for the account people. Some accounts are kept mainly because they are stable and bring in money each month. Some of these are mostly typesetting and basic paste up. There is little to no writing, designing, and creative-thinking experience. It is a decision of the Executive Committee and Staff Accountant if these accounts should be sacrificed. Limited Edition is a business, but first it is a student organization created for the purpose of giving students the opportunity to gain practical experience. This should be the prime concern, or should making a profit be the main concern? This must be decided.

(2) Turnover of staff is a problem that has increased over the past couple years. Some students join the agency, are assigned an account, but then an internship suddenly becomes available, and they quit, often leaving an account without an Account Executive or Account Assistant. When this happens, it is often without any prior notice, so the account opening can be filled before a deadline is missed or a major project comes up.

The same situation arises when staff members decide to take a practicum and feel they will not have enough time to commit to the agency as well.

The results of these situations are unhappy clients, missed deadlines, low staff morale, and lack of qualified staff. This shouldn't be happening to the extent it has been happening.

(3) Motivation is another problem with the agency staff. Most of the staff do seem to be getting their work done, but often they have to be checked up on too many times or they have to spend long hours the day or two before deadline in order to complete the newsletter or brochure or other project. The staff do not appear to realize the importance of the work they are doing. The client is paying a fee for this work and expects to have it done well and on time.

It has happened that the directors have had to complete projects that were the responsibility of the Account Executives. If the directors would not have helped, the work would not have been done by deadline. Whether the problem was with the director not explaining or pushing enough or the staff member not caring enough is hard to determine. Each situation is different.

(4) Lack of quality staff members is something that has not been a major problem, but one that should not be. It is somewhat related to the previous problem. The agency can have talented staff that are not well-motivated, and staff that are less than outstanding that are dedicated and hard-working.

The interviewing process screens out some of the students not qualified for a position with Limited Edition. But the agency also tries to give potentially-outstanding students a chance to get experience. There are times when they do not take the opportunity given them. Some have talent and potential, but use the agency for "a line on their resume" and do not contribute much to the agency.

Apathy and burn-out are two of the factors included in this area. Maybe they are over-involved in activities and get tired of being so busy, so their dedication slips. Senior-itis hits many students, too. These all affect the agency and the staff.

(5) Lack of money is a shortcoming of the agency. There are many pieces of equipment, i.e. a waxer and a camera, that the agency could use to run more efficiently. But there are no funds for these expenses. All the money not used for scholarships must go for essentials--layout paper, blue pencils, rulers, line tape. The agency cannot get ahead.

#### Solutions to the shortcomings

- (1). Have the staff sign contracts, and if they must break it, they must give two weeks notice.
- (2). Get money allocated to Limited Edition from the student publications fund.
- (3) Drop the accounts that do not offer the challenge and opportunity for a variety of skills development.

- (4) Terminate staff that do not do their work. Give one verbal and one written warning before dismissing them.
- (5) Plan social activities for the staff. Get their input for the types of activities and dates.
- (6) Have a fundraiser to raise money for new equipment.
- (7) Have workshops on burn-out, time management, etc.

#### The future of the student-run agency: Limited Edition

Limited Edition will celebrate its 10th anniversary in 1986. It has gone through many changes in directors, staff, and accounts. It has weathered problems such as low morale, few accounts, and lack of funds. But the agency needs to step back and look at its accomplishments, i.e. 1983 Outstanding Student Agency from P.R.S.S.A., and look at its low points, i.e. five staff quitting in one quarter.

The following are suggestions for the directors of Limited Edition and its faculty advisers:

(1) Re-evaluate the agency's goals and objectives. Base this re-evaluation upon class teachings, discussions with both faculty and professionals, and evaluations of public relations and advertising agencies. This will enable the Executive Committee to determine what student agencies should offer to the client and the student staff member. This will help the staff to be best prepared for internships and jobs and help the client to receive the best possible service.

(2) Get more committed people. The agency has started to have tougher interviews, and fewer staff will be selected for the 1985-86 school year. The agency should go back to its original concept, "a limited number of students." The agency should select only the number of staff it needs and no more.

If the number chosen is select, the staff will feel special and will want to work harder to prove themselves.

(3) Demand more of the staff. All staff except the directors are volunteer, but since they were selected, they should be more than willing to put in the 8-10 hours required each week. If there is work to be done the staff will feel needed. They will know that their work is vital to the agency and client, so they will want to do their best.

(4) Train the staff. Start with an orientation in the spring, including one-on-one with the old and new directors and old and new Account Executives. In this manner, the new staff will be introduced to the clients, the account, and the agency. The new Account Executives will help set the next year's goals and objectives. There should also be workshops for typesetting, paste up, and office procedures, including how to take orders for resumes.

(5) The Resume Service still needs to have some fine tuning done. One is that all the staff do not know how to take orders correctly. And the staff do not know the number of resumes being worked on. There has been miscommunication among the resume staff. They need a more efficient system of knowing where each resume is in the process. A solution is to have a board with ~~the name of~~ each person whose resume is being worked on and all the steps in the process--"spec"ing, typesetting, paste up, proofing, approval, and pick up. This will avoid any mistakes about how many resumes are being worked and where each are in the process. Quality control has been a problem at times with the Resume Service. It is imperative that a director check each resume before it is taken

to the printer. This will insure a more satisfied customer and a better reputation for the agency.

(6) Limited Edition needs to do more internal and external public relations for the agency. It needs to develop a quality brochure, slide show, and public relations campaign in order to increase awareness of the agency and its services. The agency also needs to continue with its internal newsletter, but it needs to be more informative. The newsletter should be sent to the agency's clients, so they will know more about the agency. Press releases should be sent out on the new staff and directors in order to promote agency awareness in communities other than Muncie. These activities will enhance the agency and prepare it for the future.

#### Summary

Limited Edition is only one agency, but it has served as a model for establishing other student agencies. Its strengths, weaknesses, and job descriptions are comparable to other agencies'. This is why the thesis is valid.

Dr. Melvin L. Sharpe, associate professor of Journalism at Ball State University, and Faculty Adviser for Limited Edition, commented, "Public relations students recognize the value of involvement in student agencies in terms of skill development. Public relations educators also recognize the potential of writing and design skills but see many other educational benefits which may not be readily apparent to students.

"These include learning to work harmoniously with others and the development of the ability to accept responsibility for

deadlines and for the quality of one's own performance; good attention to detail; the ability to work well under pressure; and the ability to work with minimal supervision due to the development of sound research techniques which provide self-instruction.

"A student agency could be justified as an educational tool based on skill development alone. But the additional educational bonuses provided by a student agency make a student agency an invaluable asset to a public relations educational program and prevent later on-the-job mistakes in professional careers that can be much more costly to the individual and his or her client or employer." (Educational Objectives of Student Agencies, p. 2).

Many former Limited Edition staff members have stated that their experience in the agency accomplished the above paragraph. The agency's continued existence is justified although it has its shortcomings. These need to be recognized and corrected, and then Limited Edition will be able to continue offering talented, ambitious students the opportunity to gain "the edge" over other public relations and advertising students. That edge is practical experience.

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