

SPECIAL ARTICLE

YOU ARE YOUR OWN PUBLIC RELATIONS COUNSEL

Editor's Note: This is the third and last of a series of articles devoted to developing good Public Relations between the Surveyor and his Client and between our Association and the Public. The two preceding articles were published in the October, 1963 and January, 1964 issues.

Why Public Relations? What's It To You?

The answers are simple.

It is the client who determines the success of your practice. The balance of this success depends on the impression of Surveyors in the public mind.

Clients form their impressions of our Association through contacts with individual Surveyors. And some of us may not even realize that helping to build and maintain good public relations with the public is part of our professional responsibilities.

We cannot afford to have clients who are anything less than the best of friends. Friends can be depended upon for understanding, for sympathy, or for support. We need them all. If we make friends of our clients they will always give us a fair hearing. Our Association doesn't need anything more - but it can't settle for less. That's why we need PR.

PR IN THE FIELD

In the field we should be prepared for anything.

And being prepared is part of public relations.

Whether you are the surveyor or a survey technician - or in any position where you talk to the public - the contact involves public relations.

Look at it the other way. You and your staff know how skillful and efficient you are. But does the public know?

The only way the public can measure your efficiency is by evaluating the impression you leave with them.

You Are The Firm

From the moment you meet your client, whatever you say or do affects the impression your client has both of you and your firm. You have a public relations responsibility, simply because you are under observation all the time.

Sum For Success

People react instinctively to friendliness and courtesy. Our relationship with the client should add up like this:

S ervice
U nderstanding
C onsideration
E fficiency
S atisfaction
S incerity

We can add these up to SUCCESS in our public relations.

Poor PR Habits

First on the list is a lack of courtesy, followed by indifference to the feelings and attitude of clients and a lack of knowledge, or failure to give information.

Another important one is our personal appearance. Remember the man who needs a shave or a haircut is noticed immediately whereas cleanliness is taken for granted.

One other extremely important point is tactless speech - in plain words - swearing.

Avoiding Autocracy

One of the worst impressions one can create is by being autocratic. Don't face an angry owner, who has objected to your entry on his property, by producing your Association membership card for him to read your statutory powers, namely, "right to enter land and buildings". Your card provides a ready reference to such "right" if you require police protection or a court order.

Why is the owner angry?

You may have on the previous day, in his absence, or a surveyor has at some time in the past caused damage, in his opinion, to his property by digging for stakes, trimming his shrubs, etc.

You will be better off with a little tact and sense of humour, which so often goes a long way. A courteous explanation of the need for the work and that it will be carried out in a reasonable manner will invariably satisfy the owner that you are taking his interests into consideration.

A crew of a large utility was trimming trees on private property. The owner, an intelligent woman, said she knew that work was necessary but asked, "Do they have to look so happy while they are doing it?"

Fortunately being tactful and having a sense of humour she said it with a smile.

Because each of these poor habits create impressions in people's minds, it becomes our responsibility to guard against them.

People Are Different

Every situation we meet in the field raises its own problems. Even though it might be similar to others - even identical - the people involved are different.

One thing we must never lose sight of is that the man in the field has to act on his own. Another is that in many cases you are at a disadvantage because you are on the client's home ground where he is the top man.

We all have tools that we can use effectively to create a good impression on the public. These include voice, smile, self-control, sense of humour, accuracy and enthusiasm. Probably you have other techniques you use as well.

Use them with the client and you can't go wrong.

People Are A Challenge

When first contacting the client greet him easily and courteously. Wherever possible use his name.

Listen to your client's story and get all the facts by tactful questioning. If you can solve the problem yourself, do it immediately. Otherwise tell him that you will look into the matter, when you get back to your office and make sure that you do something about it.

We have all got our share of problems - but it is of the utmost importance that they do not overwhelm us so that we forget that cardinal rule of showing a genuine interest in other people and their needs.

Wherever you go, or whatever you do, there is nothing as interesting and as challenging as people.

A successful contact with a client will invariably leave you with a feeling of accomplishment.

Third And Final

This is the third and final article in a series devoted to good Public Relations. True they have been a rehash, to some degree, of a publication prepared by a large

Public utility for guidance in dealing with the public.

Some surveyors might say, yes that's fine, in fact they may say that employees of Public utilities are obliged to cater to the public but we are different, we are in private practice. Our business is our own and it doesn't matter too much what the public think; we should be telling the public what they must do.

Those surveyors who think that way could not be more wrong. If my articles have done no more than to give a bit different slant on this matter of Public Relations, they will have served their purpose.

W. Harry Williams

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THE SECRETARY'S PAGE

CHANGES IN OFFICIAL REGISTER

<u>Date</u> 1964	<u>Name</u>	<u>Reg.</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Jan. 6	YATES, Charles Robert	533	Deceased
" 8	FISHER, Charles Parker	852	Retired
" 17	KIEFFER, Thomas John	925	"
" 20	DEWAR, John Myles	1026	"
" 24	WINTERS, William Selwyn	503	"
Feb. 14	McDOUGALL, Samuel Gladstone	478	Deceased
" 14	MacQUARRIE, Edison Malcolm	565	Retired
" 20	MacLEAN, Douglas Charles	1100	"
" 20	SEARS, John Edgar	662	Deceased (Feb. 13/64)
Mar. 20	LOEWEN, George	1148	New Registration
Apr. 3	GOOD, Gordon Sinclair	1111	Retired

SOLICITING - ADVERTISING - PARTNERSHIPS - DISCIPLINARY CASES REPORTED TO COUNCIL

Council, at its meeting on January 6, 1964, heard two reports of cases from the Disciplinary Committee, concerning hearings held in December, 1963.

In one case, evidence was filed which alleged that an unqualified member of an engineering firm in Metropolitan Toronto was soliciting business and arranging for the survey to be performed by one of our members and that the fees for such work were split. The surveyor was summoned to appear, and the owner of the property who had ordered the survey, attended the hearing as a witness. The evidence given, under oath, by the owner who had ordered the survey, was directly contrary to the evidence submitted to the Council. The Discipline Committee reported to Council that in view of the sworn evidence, there had not been any infraction of the By-laws of the Association.

The other case involved confliction with the By-laws relating to advertising and partnerships with other than members of the Association. This case involved searching of Charters of Incorporation filed with the Provincial Secretary. The members involved were represented by solicitors at the meeting of the Committee. A copy of the report of the Committee to Council was delivered to the member who made a submission to Council stating that -

- (a) New supplementary Letters Patent were being applied for, changing the name of one of the Companies and the name of the member was not to be included.
- (b) The charter of the second Company dealing with Technical Services was surrendered and a new Company was being formed with new shareholders and to carry on Technical Services only.
- (c) The listing in the Toronto telephone directory of March, 1963, is being changed in the directory to be issued in May, 1964. Letter of confirmation from the Telephone Company was submitted.
- (d) Copies of new letterheads, statement forms and survey brochures were submitted.
- (e) The brochure which had been used by the previous partnership has been destroyed and the member gave his assurance that he will not use any promotional material other than a professional card.
- (f) Any authority which may have been given to any one to solicit business on behalf of the member has been revoked. The member has promised not to grant any right or authority to any firm, person or corporation to solicit business for him under any circumstances whatsoever.
- (g) The member apologized to the Council and members of the Association for any inconvenience or embarrassment he may have caused and gave his assurance that such infractions of the By-laws would not recur.
The costs involved in this case have been paid by the member.