**Public Affairs Department: Gulf Oil Corporation**

- **Support**:
  - Gulf Oil Exploration and Production Co. (GOEP)
  - Gulf Oil Refining and Marketing Co. (GORAM)
  - Gulf Oil Chemicals Co. (GOCHEM)
  - Gulf Mineral Resources Co. (GMRC)
  - Gulf Science and Technology Co. (GS&T)

- **Analysis**:
  - International and Domestic Policy Analysis and Planning

- **Communications**:
  - Advertising and Corporate Communications
    - Corporate Advertising
    - Product Advertising
    - Media Relations
  - Internal Communications
  - Executive Communications
  - International Communications

- **Advocacy**:
  - International Affairs
  - Domestic Policy Analysis
  - International Policy Analysis (Foreign)

- **State and Federal Relations**
  - Government and Industry Affairs
  - Community Affairs
  - Third Party Advocacy
  - Washington Office
  - Public Affairs -- U.S. (e.g., state relations)

**Issues Management**

- Issue identification
- Issue analysis
- Policy options
- Program design
- Evaluation of results

**Public Issue Life Cycle**

1. Changing stakeholder expectations - *agenda-building*
2. Political action - *agenda entrance*
3. Formal government actions - *public policy formulation and adoption*
4. Legal implementation - *public policy implementation*
   - *public policy administration*

**Managing Conflicts: Managing Issues in Action**

- **Scope**
- **Intensity**
- **Visibility**
“THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY”
– Berger and Luckmann (1966)

Steve Jobs: The Reality Distortion Field
Some Dimensions of Problem Definition:

- Causality: blaming; simplifying
- Severity: scale; looming disaster
- Incidence: universality; permanence
- Novelty: unprecedented; requiring new approaches
- Proximity: personal relevance; neighborhood effects
- Crisis: the “rhetoric of calamity;” “crisis proportions;” emergency/demands for immediate action
- Problem populations: dependent; disadvantaged
- Solutions: availability; acceptability; affordability

Source: Rochefort & Cobb 1994

Fourteen Ways to Deal with the Press

- Make the CEO responsible for press relations.
- Face the facts.
- Consider the public interest in every operating decision.
- Be a source before you are a subject.
- If you want your views represented, you have to talk.
- Respond fast.
- Cage your lawyers.
- Tell the truth — or nothing.
- Don’t expect to bat 1.000.
- Don’t take it personally.
- Control what you can.
- Know whom you’re dealing with.
- Avoid TV unless you feel free to speak candidly (live is better than canned).
- Be human.

Some Principles of Crisis Management

- Maintain a crisis management communication system that is constantly updated and allows managers and regulators to identify critical products, their origins and destinations, and provides communications information to reach critical employees at all hours.

- Maintain and update a crisis management plan tied to the most reasonable contingencies. No one can anticipate all possibilities, however. Make sure the plan is adaptable so that unforeseen events can be dealt with. Make sure that the company has sequestered resources sufficient to manage the most probable events.

- Titrate the company response to the nature of the harm created and/or the potential threat: Deaths require a top-level, usually CEO response; injuries or non-life-threatening incidents require public responses by managers at appropriate levels of seniority and function.

- If the problem is discovered by the company, notify regulators and appropriate government officials without waiting for the problem to become known outside the company, e.g., by the media or by whistleblowers.

- If the problem is significant, go public immediately -- do not wait until the company has full information and/or understanding about the problem, its sources and its effects, to report to the public. Do not wait for the public to sort out who is affected and how; take affirmative action to find those at risk, notify them, and remove them from any possible danger. Be conservative in judgments -- err on the side of public safety. Go public with an explanation of what the company has done, what it will do, and how it will continue to report on the problem. Adjust the public stance as the problem is better understood.

- Where possible, talk to the media with regulators and government officials present, so it is clear that resolution of the problem is a cooperative effort and that nothing will be hidden and that, if penalties are appropriate, the company will not hide from or fight the government.

- Communicate in ways that are likely to generate clear, unfiltered messages. For example, prefer to talk on live TV/radio shows rather than give interviews that can be later edited for “sound bites” that represent the media’s, not the company’s, preference for the message.

- Intervene aggressively to fix the problem as soon as possible after it is revealed. Document and report steps taken to resolve the problem. The greater the harm, past or potential, the greater the need for quick response and transparency in response. If the harm is or proves minor, it is not necessary to maintain the company in a continuous reporting mode; if the problem is passing, the rate and scale of notification and reporting can fade appropriately.

- Be sure to remain in close touch with organization employees, so they are aware of and supportive of the company’s efforts, and aware of the impact on them.

- Consider replacement of top corporate leadership, for both symbolic and substantive effects. But employee departures should not be done so as to produce scapegoats.

- Depending on the nature of the problem, consider supporting (not sponsoring!!!) outside objective studies of the event. This may contribute to organization credibility and help future efforts.

Social Audits

- An inventory of a company's "social" programs
- An inventory of a company's social impacts
- Cost estimates of various company activities thought to have special social significance
- Results of surveys of various company practices regarding environmental pollution, employment discrimination, occupational health and safety, and so on, undertaken at the behest of government regulatory agencies
- Critical reports or surveys made by persons or organizations external to a company or industry, usually dealing with some particular area of social concern such as sexual discrimination
- Attempts to determine the attitude of various groups important to the corporation, such as stockholders, customers, employees, and others

Source: Blake et al., Social Auditing