A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS AND LIABILITIES OF FORMER JOURNALISTS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS ROLES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF STRENGTHS AND LIABILITIES
OF FORMER JOURNALISTS IN PUBLIC RELATIONS ROLES

By Robert Youngblood

Dr. Glen T. Cameron, Thesis Supervisor

ABSTRACT

Since the birth of the public relations industry, journalists have filled much of its ranks. Following the introduction of James Grunig's general theory of two-way symmetrical public relations, various corollaries have questioned how well the background, training and worldviews of journalism prepare a public relations practitioner for the role of strategic communications manager prized by Grunig's theory. This project surveyed public relations managers at a broad cross-section of largely for-profit companies, most of them US-headquartered, on the skills, abilities and limitations former journalists bring to the profession and in particular to strategic communications roles and responsibilities. Writing, story-pitching and analysis were the most appreciated skills and abilities even for strategic roles, qualities that some corollaries to Grunig's theory have tended to relegate to with technical rather than strategic functions in public relations. However, some managers expressed concerns over transfer of certain journalistic worldviews, or at least aspects they attributed to news backgrounds, traits that they saw as complicating former journalists' adaptation to a corporate world.

Introduction

Why a study of former journalists in public relations

The public relations industry is surging in population (Sullivan, 2011) and revenue (Sudhaman, 2014), even as traditional news journalism shrinks, particularly amid the implosion of print media (ASNE, 2012 and 2014). Observers of reporting increasingly worry about the share of news that springs from, or even reproduces, information prepared by public relations practitioners (DeLorme & Fedler, 2003; Tilley & Hollings, 2008; Neijens & Smit, 2006). A large (Fiske, 2011) but rarely and only locally measured share of those practitioners potentially enjoys an advantage in media relations by having been journalists themselves earlier in their careers.

Their new profession, however, may hold in decreasing esteem (Dozier, 1992) the media relations skills that journalism provided those practitioners, as the dominant general theory of public relations (Grunig & Hunt, 1984) at least in the United States emphasizes a strategic role greater than, and largely separate from, media relations. Various recent corollary theories have increasingly emphasized a strategic and corporate nature to public relations, at least at its senior-most levels. James E. Grunig's general theory of public *relations* (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Grunig, 2001; Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002), and others' subsequent corollaries have essentially divided practice into two roles: strategist and technician (Broom & Smith, 1979; Dozier, 1992; Dozier, L. Grunig & J. Grunig, 1995). In its ideal state, according to Grunig's Excellence Theory

(Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995; Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002; Grunig, Grunig & Ehring, 1992; Grunig & White, 1992; Grupp, 2010), public relations is not just the art of communications, exemplified in his model of two-way symmetrical communications, but rather communications as an integral aspect and function of broader corporate strategic operations and planning.

If journalistic skills matter less to public relations, is there any reason for the industry to favor hiring of journalists over any other applicant pool? Professional (eg Turnball, 2012; Pearce, 2011) and theoretical (Broom & Smith, 1979; Dozier & Broom, 1995) adherents to Grunig's theory maintain that public relations leaders and managers need training and abilities in lines with organizational strategic leadership skills in preference to those skills usually associated with communications (Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995). Yet even as the effect of Grunig's theories and other forms of modern public relations (Grunig & Grunig, 2001; Macnamara, 1999 & 2011) has led to a drive to use formal evaluative measures to benchmark the effectiveness of public relations, the functionalities of former journalists in even the obvious category of technician, often described as the "in-house journalist," are largely unmeasured and untested. So is a common argument among theorists (Brunning & Lambe, 2008; Gildea, 1979) but also some practitioners (Fiske 2011; Cain 2011): that former journalists fundamentally lack grounding in the strategic qualities held in highest regard under Grunig's general theory and its corollaries.

Given this sea change in theory and approach of public relations, the purpose of this study is to determine which, if any, journalistic skills serve the industry and practitioners best, and which, if any, aspects of former journalists' past experiences provide the most lasting benefits or handicaps. Similarly, the research addresses which skills former journalists must gain to function effectively as strategists in their new profession.

More recent alternatives exist to Grunig's general theory and subsequent Excellence Theory for organizations (Grunig & White, 1992), in particular the Contingency Theory of Accommodation (Cancel & Cameron &al, 1997). While such theories usually also emphasize a strategic nature to the practice of public relations, their approaches have not in and of themselves given rise to wholesale questioning of the role of former journalists in the industry as has Grunigian theory. Further, in part because of its earlier arrival, Grunig's approach arguably has had, and perhaps continues to have, the largest recent impact on public relations, with its corollaries seeking to influence the industry's role for and appreciation of former journalists. Thus this project focuses primarily on former journalists' relations to public relations through the prism of Grunigian theory.

From skills prioritization by executives to anecdotal comments by practitioners and managers alike, the two most commonly cited advantages journalists bring to public relations are 1) the ability to write effective content and 2) contacts within the journalistic community (Agyemang, 2011; Berg, 2009; Cain, 2011; Caruso, 2011; Fiske 2011; *Inside PR*, 2010; Pearce, 2010). But the first does not fulfill the needs for strategic orientation of effective and excellent practitioners under Grunig's Excellence Theory. And the second applies primarily to the less-evolved Public Information Model under Grunig's general theory, in which an organization simply promotes its message with limited back-and-forth with its audience. Little specificity and even less analysis of broader qualities of former journalists exist.

Nevertheless the hiring, based on qualifications sought, and much of the training of public relations practitioners, both in-house and at universities, continue to emphasize skills and perceived qualifications based on the former-journalist model (Agyemang, 2011; Broom & Smith, 1979; Bunker, 2011; Cain, 2011; Caruso, 2011; DiStaso, Stacks & Botan, 2009; Dozier, 1992; Elliott & Koper, 2002; Fiske 2011; Gildea, 1979; Hardin & Pompper, 2004; *Inside PR*, 2010; Kennedy, 2011; Macnamara, 1999; Ward, 2007) – all without any but ritual proof that those skills are vital, much less how vital, or how they are most effectively and most often employed.

A department, much less an industry, that fails to recognize and effectively employ its resources is hobbled, and so is the organization, or economy, that depends on its production. For all the metrics public relations has recently deployed, replacing, or at least augmenting clippings and press references (Macnamara, 1999), under modern theory, most public relations continues to be faulted as either an outreach endeavor too focused on media (Grunig, 2001; Yeo & Sriramesh, 2009; Fiske, 2011) or a function too closely aligned, or under the control of, marketing (Broom &al, 1999; Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995; Grunig & Grunig, 1998). The closest the industry and scholars of it come to formal field assessments of skills applicability and utility, as opposed to a theoretical focus on strategy, is critiques of public relations education and training ... which often fault entry-level practitioners' poor writing and other journalistic training (Berry &al,

2011; Hardin & Pompper, 2004). The professional literature presumes former journalists' skills to be primarily or even solely that of deadline-oriented writers who can "pitch," (Caruso, 2011) but 1) is that actually true in their new profession? and 2) is that all?

What do former journalists offer public relations

To answer such questions, this project has pursued these principal research questions:

- RQ1: **What specific skills do former journalists bring to and most use in public relations, and which necessary ones do they most lack?**
- RQ2: **In what roles in two-way symmetrical public relations can and do former journalists exercise skills and expertise from their previous profession (eg, and in particular, environmental scanning)?**
- RQ3: **Do journalistic worldviews or other vestiges handicap former journalists in their new profession at any level, especially from serving in strategic roles?**

Despite silence on the subject dating back to the early days of public relations, scholastic investigation into the viability and appropriateness of former journalists in public relations is necessary for both the industry and potential applicants. Best use and appreciation of skills serves both employer and employee (NCREL, 2003; NRC, 2001). Nevertheless, research has found few general assessments of journalistic skills in public relations (eg Broom & Smith, 1979; van Ruler, 2004), while only one limited study (Delker, 2012) examines in-depth the views of public relations professionals, both managers and technicians, concerning success and satisfaction of former journalists in their new industry. Rarer is any scholarly investigation, even tertiary, of which particular skills and what mind-set contribute to success in former journalists' new endeavor, and discussion of which skills they lack is largely anecdotal. Understanding the full value, both benefits and handicaps, newsroom experience provides in public relations, as well as what it fails to provide, would allow exiting journalists to assess better their suitability to the profession while providing hiring managers the means to prioritize journalistic skill sets in terms of best fit and effectiveness.

The issues related to such skills and abilities are many: Grunig (2001) maintains that truly excellent public relations requires a strategic approach that entails high-ranking corporate status, with its relevant managerial training. This assumption is rarely if ever challenged in corollary theories or even in alternative ones, as described below. Broom (Dozier & Broom, 1995) expands on Grunig's theory to question the value of technicians, which he categorizes as journalistic in skill set, and the media relations function that he says they tend to practice, arguing that such an approach fits the Public Information Model that falls short of Grunig's Excellence Theory (Grunig & White, 1992). The strategic element under Grunig's ideal public relations is more amorphous, in part because studies (eg Ferguson, 1979, summarized in Dozier; Broom, 1982; Yeo & Sriramesh, 2009) have found that even practitioners who prize a strategic element over pure media relations acknowledge that much or most of their work remains one-way public relations that, again, does not meet Grunig's standard. Contingency theory also postulates a strategic role, as does the European Book of Knowledge (Verčič, 2009).

Unlike studies that have assessed public relations practitioners' activities as reported from within PR departments and firms (Broom, 1982; Ferguson, 1979, summarized in Dozier & Ehling, 1992; Delker, 2012; Reinardy, 2009; Yeo & Sriramesh, 2009), this project sought to focus on career transition; it has examined the skills, worldviews roles and advancement, potential and achieved, of practitioners migrating from journalism, assessing those aspects' impacts on output and success for the organization as well as the individual employee.

How this project evaluated former journalists turned PR practitioners

The managerial supervisors of former journalists now in public relations have a unique perspective – influenced by their own experience in journalism, or lack of it – to assess their employees' strengths and liabilities in the context of modern theories of strategic communications. This project uses interview questions to explore thematic application of former journalists' skills. In particular, it qualifies the similarities and differences that the supervisors have detected in former journalists' actual practices and demonstrated potential in relation to the limitations postulated by such exponents of Grunig's theories as Broom (1982). In the process, the research seeks to identify and assess potential strengths, chiefly in terms of skills, or lack of them, and their applications, and potential liabilities, such as worldviews and limitations concerning strategic mindset and orientation, that former journalists bring to the public relations field.

One largely undeveloped aspect of modern theories is their reliance on environmental monitoring, or "scanning," (Grunig & Grunig, 1998; Kim [Cameron],

2012) as the means for an organization to learn from – and adapt symmetrically to and with – its audiences. James and Larissa Grunig (2010) among others have argued that the Internet allows such direct and effective interaction, but the theorists in general provide scant insight into the mechanics of this scanning, lumping it into "issues management through boundary spanning activities" (Lauzen, 1995b, p 2), which is defined as the frequent interaction with an organization's publics to report back to the group's leading decision makers (Lauzen, 1995a, citing White & Dozier, 1992). But no specific skills and few techniques are listed, and the analysis ignores, almost pointedly and with the very rare exception (cfly Boudreaux, 2005), the newshound skills former journalists presumably exercised and honed in their previous profession.

Some public relations scholars (eg McBride, 1989) raise a particular objection concerning the appropriateness and utility of former journalists in public relation: worldviews. Indeed, textbook journalistic worldviews – objectivity (Lippmann, 1922), the right to know (Moyers, 2003), public service (Deuze, 2005), responsibility to the audience (Klaidman & Beauchamp, 1987; Dozier & Ehling, 1992), social justice (Coleman, 2000) and above all the pursuit of truth (Hafez, 2002) and accuracy (Klaidman & Beauchamp, 1987) – do not, at first glance, fit well into classic forms or recent theory of public relations, from the publicity agent approach of a Barnam through to Grunig's ideal worldviews of flexibility and conflict management (Grunig & White, 1992). But successful transitions by the likes of Lee (Raucher, 1968) in the dawn of public relations to Lipps (Beaujon, 2012) in this century suggest a flexibility in either the journalists or those worldviews that allows at least some of the migrants to survive and even thrive in their new role, or a flexibility on the part of the industry and the roles it allows former journalists (Fitzpatrick & Bronstein, 2006).

But no obviously applicable assessment tools and little theory concerning skills assessment offer insight into why or how journalists succeed, or do not, after entering public relations. Workplace and management theories focus extensively on job motivation (London, 1983; Miner, 1993; Fisher, 2009) and satisfaction (Sirota &al, 2005) but pay surprisingly scant attention to skills selection and utilization for employees' changing industries. Given this absence, skills aspects of the research questions must rely on managers' anecdotal responses in the qualitative interviews.

Why this research matters

Inquiry into which training and strengths, besides writing, former journalists (can) best transfer to public relations is wide open. The lack of research and application of theory offers the opportunity to discover and uncover knowledge of real use in the working world. For public relations directors, human resource administrators and academics teaching mass communications, an improved understanding of the best utility for former journalists offers justification and improvement in training, counseling, hiring, deployment and advancement decisions, on a theoretical and practical basis.

Literature Review

Journalists as the pioneers of public relations

Former journalists have always abounded in public relations, dating back to the modern industry's precursor, as exemplified by P.T. Barnum, himself a former newspaper editor (Raucher, 1968). Understanding both the need for and the aboveboard means of delivering information so that it would draw attention, it was journalists who early in the last century created what we know today as public relations, developing a standards-based professionalized promotion of clients' interests.

None of these newsroom refugees did more to pioneer those standards and the path from newspaper to public relations than the American Ivy Ledbetter Lee. He was preceded in such professionalization by Ernest H. Heinrichs, a German immigrant who worked at a number of Pittsburgh newspapers before George Westinghouse hired him in 1889 to "prevent misrepresentation" as the press relations chief for Westinghouse's electric company (Raucher, 1968). But it was Lee, a former *New York Times* reporter who left the *New York World* in 1903 after tiring of coming home from work at 2 a.m., who was credited even then with establishing the industry's ethics and practices, codifying both the migration and skill set on which public relations would largely rely on for much of its history.

In a 1906 *American Magazine* article, Stephen Morse described how large corporations had discovered the effectiveness of direct outreach to the public to improve their images, and cited Lee's activities as instrumental to that revelation (Russell & Bishop, 2008). During a 1905 coal strike, Lee had sent a letter to newspaper editors describing what came to be known as his Declaration of Principles. Principal points called for public relations to be transparent in its support for its clients as it supplies accurate, factual material suitable for publication. This bedrock of press relations as media relations informed both the (ideal) operations and the (ideal) image of the industry for three-quarters of a century, with the Declaration offering a functions-based description of public relations that fits as well as any other effort that does not focus on strategy or management:

> We aim to supply news. […] In brief, our plan is, frankly and openly, on behalf of business concerns and public institutions, to supply to the press and public of the United States prompt and accurate information concerning subjects which it is of value and interest to the public to know about. ... I send out only matter every detail of which I am willing to assist any editor in verifying for himself (Reddi, 2009, p 34).

The Declaration promised neither pure truth nor the full truth, but it did commit public relations to providing to the public, via journalists, accurate information – a shift from a Public Be Damned approach to Public Be Informed, to use a rough translation (as cited by Reddi, 2009) of Grunig's evolution theory for public relations. Lee's success in promoting clients led to his forming his own agency with Joseph Clarke, who quit as managing editor of *The New York Sun*, and a third former newspaperman (Raucher, 1968).

Lee's example, both in business success and in establishing norms and outlining an ethics, was emulated and even magnified in other countries. John Elliot, the first Briton known to have the term "public relations" in a job title, knew Lee from Elliot's time as a reporter for the *New York Mail*. After returning to England, he went to work for Southern Railroad, asking to be called Public Relations Officer. His career mirrored Lee's in many ways, as he freely borrowed from the American's tactics as well as other public relations developments across the Atlantic, including issuing a set of pledges very similar to, but more stringent than, Lee's Declaration (Harrison & Moloney, 2003).

Throughout the growth of the profession worldwide, besides Britain (Dolphin, 2002), from Singapore (Yeo & Sriramesh, 2009) to Germany (Sommer-Guist, 2007) and from Russia (Pysh, 2009) to South Africa (Steyn, 2009) to the Philippines (Lorenzo-Malo, 2007), the pioneers and the leaders of public relations in countries and cultures around the world largely followed the American model, with journalists migrating to fill the ranks of the new industry.

But while descriptions of the predominance of former journalists in public relations are plentiful, as are anecdotal and individual assessments of the value of their skills and the near-inevitability of a migration from newsroom to public relations for some journalists (Neff 2001 and Pearson 2009, as cited in Yaxley, 2012), there exist few rigorous or scientifically valid proofs of the actual share of practitioners with a journalistic background or of how they use their skills. The rare example of a census of the share of former journalists is a 1977 finding by Nayman, McKee & Lattimore that two-thirds of Denver practitioners in public relations then were former journalists and that half of the journalists in the area entertained thoughts of migrating as well (DeLorme & Fedler, 2003).

The two industries' very different situations

Throughout the history of the migration, most journalists have given similar reasons for switching to public relations: Higher pay, predictable hours and newsroom burnout figure highly in both personal (eg Usher, 2001; Hodierne, 2009) and scholarly (eg Reinardy, 2009) accounts of why so many practitioners left journalism.

While journalists have nearly always carped about low pay, research over the years has also found much broader dissatisfaction. Job satisfaction in journalism is low now, but it was low five decades ago as well, when Samuelson studied a different migration of newspaper journalists to other careers (Reinardy, 2009). He found 72 former journalists by surveying 223 journalism graduates who worked at newspapers between 1950 and 1961, and he estimated annual editorial turnover at 10% to 20%. Those who had quit blamed poor management, limited career opportunities and low pay. Nevertheless, pay did not affect satisfaction levels. New journalists were less happy than those who had worked for at least four years.

Nearly 10 years later, Johnstone, Slawski, & Bowman (Reinardy, 2009) studied 1,300 journalists' satisfaction levels, parsing the subjects by age, experience, gender, education and other variables including salary. Up to a quarter of younger journalists questioned their profession, usually because of a disconnect between their ideals and the daily grind, and not appreciably because of pay. More than four of every five journalists expected to still be in the field five years later.

Starting in 1982, by asking the simple question, “All things considered, how satisfied are you with your present job – would you say very satisfied, fairly satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?” teams led by Weaver & Wilhoit tracked 25 years of falling satisfaction. Beginning with a survey of 1,001 newsroom workers, they first found that 82.6 % of journalists expected to remain in the field for the next five years, as 40 % reported they were “very satisfied” in their jobs (Reinardy, 2009). By 1992, that figure had fallen to just 27.3 %, and twice as large a share of journalists said they were planning to leave the industry within five years. Reinardy summarizes Weaver & Wilhoit’s assessment of the growing dissatisfaction:

> Journalists in 1992 appeared to want to lead normal lives. They were less willing to suffer the dislocation and unpredictable schedules that were accepted by an earlier generation, especially in a competitive environment in which newsrooms were expected to do much more with fewer resources, and where there was little hope of professional advancement in an era of stalled growth. (pp 8-9)

Ten years later, Weaver, Beam, Brownlee, Voakes & Wilhoit found some leveling off in satisfaction and a 20% drop in the number of journalists planning to leave the profession, with cub journalists happier than veterans for the first time but women particularly dissatisfied (Reinardy, 2009).

The most recent survey, Reinardy's own (2009), undertaken amid the mass shrinkage in print news employment and as about a quarter of newspaper editorial jobs disappeared from 2001 (ASNE, 2010), found that only 38.1% of respondents expected to still be working at a newspaper in five years, while 25.7% said they were planning their exit, the largest share ever; the rest were uncertain. Besides the perennial complaints of low job satisfaction, long hours and work-life tensions, another reason loomed large: the implosion in newsroom employment.

Most recently, Reinardy (2012) surveyed 2,160 more newspaper journalists, whom he now described as "layoff survivors," as newsrooms were back to 1970s staffing levels. All of his subjects worked at newspapers that had shed staff through cuts, and not surprisingly, he found "a moderate rate of exhaustion [and] a high rate of cynicism."

Even as journalism is shrinking, public relations has mushroomed as an industry. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data indicate that the number of public relations employees doubled as a ratio of the U.S. population, to 9 per million in 2008 from 4.5 in 1980, while the share of journalists dropped to 2.5 per million from 3.6 (Sullivan, 2011). By contrast, in just the first 10 months of 2008, BLS data indicate that the number of newspaper employees, including journalists, fell by 22,400 to 313,600 (Hodierne, 2009).

R. Jamil Jonna, a researcher for the authors Robert McChesney and John Nichols, also extrapolated revenue at public relations agencies from census data to show a more than doubling in 2007 from 1997, $8.75 billion vs. $3.5 billion, figures that reflect only a sliver of total spending related to all public relations activities. Such independent agencies employed 50,499 employees as of 2007, up from 38,735 just ten years earlier (Sullivan, 2011). In corporations, employment looks to remain at least steady in the post-financial crisis era, with the USC Annenberg Strategic Communication and Public Relations Center finding 40% of public companies expecting to increase their 2014 budgets for public relations/communications, 35% to decrease them and 25% to leave them unchanged, a slowing from the previous year, when 60% foresaw an increase and only 23% a decrease; in 2012, closer to the financial crisis, 50% were holding steady, but more than half of the remainder planned increases (USC Annenberg, 2012 & 2014).

At daily newspapers, total employment of journalists in 2013 fell to 36,700, as measured by the American Society of Newspaper Editors census (which has represented at most just over 70% of all newspapers in the United States) from the record high of 56,400 print-only reporters and editors in 2001 and 55,000 combined print and online journalists as recently as 2007 (ASNE 2014 and 2012, detailed tables). According to the Newspaper Association of America, US newspapers' advertising income in 2013 was $23.6 billion, including online ads, a 6.5% decline from 2012 and less than half of the record $49.4 billion of 2005 (NAA, 2014).[1]

Some of the same economic pressures, as well as perennial journalism job dissatisfaction (LeGore, 2009), have affected employment in television news as well, with the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism estimating that

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[1] Vice President of Research & Industry Analysis Jim Conaghan confirmed by email on 10 November 2014 that all NAA figures are in current dollars. The record sum is equal to $58.9 billion in 2013 dollars, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics online calculator (bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm), which is based on consumer price index.

network news employment, along with audience share, is down by more than half since its 1980s record high. Local-station newsroom employment was close to its record high in 2011, with the gains almost exclusively in larger markets, but total revenue fell in that non-election year while 2010 data from Papper indicated that median staff size was unchanged over the previous five years as stations of all sizes conflated previously multiperson newsgathering roles into “solo journalists” (Guskin & Rosenstiel, 2012).

The value of former journalists in contemporary public relations

If past data on the numbers and shares of former journalists in public relations are rare, the current situation is little clearer. While specific cases of recent migration range from those of relatively young reporters (Beaujon, 2012) to veterans who reached the top of the field (Ward, 2007), surprisingly little data exist on where journalists have ended up following newsrooms’ shrinkage. This wealth of examples but lack of data is not restricted to the United States, with similar anecdotes and claims of industry-contraction-related migration coming from other Anglophone countries like Canada (Bunker, 2011) and Australia (Turnball, 2012).

In the United Kingdom, one study (Nel, 2010) determined that only 23% of a small, self-selected sample of journalists “made redundant” over a 10-month period had been hired full-time subsequently. Of those, 18% had moved to public relations/marketing, the second-largest specific category of new employment, tied with “other” and trailing only journalism.

In the United States, a similarly self-selecting survey (Hodierne, 2009) of 595 unemployed journalists found that only 6% were re-employed at a newspaper while an specified number had opted for public relations, including one of those profiled (a former *USA Today* and *Denver Post* reporter who now was writing speeches, press releases and the employee newsletter for a National Park Service regional headquarters: “They were looking for a veteran journalist who could write and was adaptable” [paragraph 79]). If many of those with new jobs did end up in public relations, the promise of better pay may have proved false, as the midpoint of newspaper vs. post-newspaper pay was one $10,000 band less than the claimed midpoint of $50,000 to $59,000 in newspaper salaries.

In a study of the 10% decline in the Swedish national journalists union’s membership from 2002 to 2009, Nygren (2007-2009) surveyed 150 re-employed former union members, finding that 28% had moved to public relations or other information/marketing employment. The category was the single largest outside of journalism, though members of that latter category either did not seek or were deemed ineligible for union membership. (Membership in a union or syndicate is at least helpful if not required for reporting or for journalism-related preferential tax and occupational status in many European Union countries but it is usually denied to self-declared journalists deemed to be in public relations or other less purely journalistic work.)

This ongoing if less than rigorously quantified migration is aided by the many public relations professionals – by no means all of them former journalists themselves – who defend and prize the skills that journalists bring to the industry. In the literature, these commonly include: precision and a facts-based approach to communications; the ability to distinguish what will constitute news and how to pitch it, as well as how to contextualize information to fit current news concerns; and critical thinking and the ability to explain why lesser elements will not generate traction with the news media or other outside audiences. In short, former journalists bring newshound skills: a nose for news, writing ability and a willingness to "speak truth to clients," all of which increase the persuasiveness and publishability of public relations materials (Bunker, 2011). Less innate skills include knowing how reporters work and sharing journalists' vocabulary (Cain, 2011). "[T]he most successful PR people are those who think and act like reporters," a nature helpful if not imperative "to define a story, write it and present it" (Caruso, 2011, paragraphs 1-2).

Such defenses are not limited to the United States. In Britain, the website *Inside PR* (2010) proselytizes for journalists to consider public relations. Jude Clay, press officer at animal charity RSPCA, is quoted as saying: "Ex-journalists make the best PROs. As an ex-journo myself, I think that knowledge of the industry is a massive, massive advantage" (paragraph 12). Neil Brenson, director of business PR at the agency Cirkle, is cited as saying that "the skills are definitely transferable, the journalism experience is invaluable and the job satisfaction is incredible" (paragraph 11).

Nor are such endorsements limited just to OECD countries. Agyemang (2007) makes similar points in defending the role of former journalists like himself in Ghanaian public relations operations. While acknowledging that some journalists lack the multifaceted nature the author deems necessary for public relations, he quotes the director of a Ghanian PR firm, an unidentified former editor, as saying, "Journalists make excellent PROs – they are resourceful, quick-witted, write well and know what is of interest" (paragraph 9).

Other public relations leaders, however, including some who themselves were journalists, fault their industry for its past or present reliance on former journalists.

In a direct response to Caruso, Fiske (2011), then Chair and CEO of the Public Relations Society of America, argues that journalists cannot always transfer their skills to public relations effectively. A former journalist, Fiske worries about unspecified signs that journalists were forming a rapidly increasing share of industry practitioners. These migrants do not build long-term relationships with their audiences, she argues. She approvingly quotes Carol Northrup, a public relations practitioner in California, that former journalists have a "communication culture of false urgency" (paragraph 5) and do not recognize the true value of reputation management. While journalists share with public relations practitioners a dedication to clear communication and can pitch stories to an editor, Fiske quotes Northrup as saying they usually cannot sell their ideas to clients, lacking marketing or strategic communications knowledge. Public relations is not publicity, Fiske argues, and practitioners must be advocates for clients or their employers, promoting their work, not the former journalists' own.

Other public relations specialists, many of them managers if not as well credentialed as Fiske, also express doubts about former journalists in their field.

One self-described public relations manager, the head of an agency that specializes in preparation and presentation of text-based materials, sees both advantages and disadvantages to former journalists, but is particularly concerned about what he describes as their stubborn reliance on news procedures that limit the creativity necessary for effective campaigns and, potentially, their difficulty adapting to orderly work whose goal is to satisfy clients and develop business (Kennedy, 2011).

Concerns about whether journalistic skills can fit into public relations successfully are not US-specific.

In Britain, Jane Cameron, described as “a working journalist and PR,” (Cain, 2011, paragraph 1) lists such positive qualities as speaking the same language as journalists and thinking like a journalist to encourage clients toward topics that will enthuse journalists. But she echoes a colleague that journalists entering public relations need retraining in skills and especially worldview as many “inevitably struggle to understand the broader commercial context of PR.” (paragraph 7)

A self-described manager of an Australian public relations firm argues that the profession, at least at its more senior corporate levels, requires a cooperative approach to communications that focuses on far more than just transmitting information. “Journalists communicate **to**, not **with**” (Pearce, 2011, paragraph 2, emphasis in original).

Another Australian – a former newspaper editor who co-founded a leading public relations agency and who now teaches media and communications studies at RMIT University and writes on media affairs for the current events magazine *Crikey* – curtly dismisses the idea that journalists Down Under can or will find jobs in public relations as their industry shrinks. Instead, he argues that the best practitioners now train in public relations from the start and thus avoid emphasizing media relations, instead concentrating on informing the public directly (Turnball, 2012).

In the Philippines, where as recently as the early Marcos era former journalists are said to have made up the lion's share of public relations practitioners, a more recent, largely managerial form of public relations has drawn professionals with little or no newsroom experience (Lorenzo-Malo, 2007); similar transformations are reported for Russia (Pysh & Pritchard, 2009) and the Netherlands (van Ruler, 2004). Calls for pruning former journalists from Singaporean public relations have met with more mixed results (Yeo & Sriramesh, 2009).

Public relations reconceived as managing strategic communications

That backlash against former journalists in public relations is related to the development and promulgation starting in the 1980s of a new model of public relations as well as a broader redefinition of the profession, elements of both changes related directly and indirectly to James Grunig's development of what he carefully described as potentially "the first general theory of public relations" (Grunig & White, 1992, p 2).

For purposes of defining the utility of journalistic skills in the profession, public relations can best be described by what it is not. Journalism's aim is to convey information, ideas and opinions that are either of interest to the public or of public interest. Public relations mediates or facilitates information between clients and those clients' targeted audiences in an effort to present the clients or their activities in a desired light. Thus, journalism requires balanced and fair information, with opinions clearly demarcated, while public relations' primary professional and instrumental requirements are to be persuasive and influential (Spence &al, 2011).

Negative definitions of public relations exclude unethical or other huckster activities. But disputes over a positive definition have long dogged the profession. Lee's Declaration was operational, but another pioneer of the industry, Edward Bernays[2], very generally defined public relations as persuasive communications (Brown 2010). In particular, he accentuated the persuasive provision of information that leads a public to modify its views so that it shares the attitudes of an institution and vice-versa (Bernays, 1923, as quoted in Seitel, 2001, via onlineacademics.org).

Attempts at descriptive, prescriptive and working definitions have since proliferated, many of them seeking to incorporate both classic practice and modern theory, but the closest to a universal definition is the broad Statement of Mexico accepted by PR institutions for 34 countries in 1978: It emphasizes the "art and social science of analyzing trends, predicting their consequences, counseling organization leaders, and implementing planned programs of action which serve both the organization's and the public's interest" (Olusegun, 2006, p 3).

For instance, Kruckeberg & Starck (1988) argue that the vocation is "the active attempt to restore and maintain a sense of community" (p 51), while Heath (2001, p 8, as cited in Heath, 2010, p 719) calls it "a relationship-building professional activity" and Brody (1987) describes it as "less an art or science and more a business" (as cited by Kruckeberg & Starck, 1988, p 15). Hutton (1999) offers the most laconic and modern definition: "managing strategic relationships." (p 208)

While Grunig himself (Grunig & White, 1992, p 32) writes, "Realistically, it can be defined as little more than 'what public relations people do,' " most other modern

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[2] Bernays studied journalism at Cornell, but no record was found of his ever having been a practicing journalist.

definitions rely in significant measure on his general theory, which has led a sizable proportion of public relations theorists and top managers to consider communications skills as at the very most the equal of business skills (strategic and managerial ability) in determining the value of public relations practitioners, particularly at senior levels.

Grunig posits two fundamental underpinnings for his approach to public relations: his four-way model and the strategic essence of public relations (Grunig & Hunt, 1984), and both are crucial to his Excellence Theory (Grunig, Grunig & Ehring, 1992; Grunig & White, 1992; Grunig, 2001; Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002).

The four-way model describes an evolution in public relations that involves four levels, any one or more of which can be present in an organization's public relations efforts at any given time: the Press-Agentry-Publicity form, a gimmick- and celebrity-centric approach exemplified by Barnum; the Public Information approach, typified by Lee, which closely resembles journalistic diffusion of information; the Two-Way Asymmetric Model, in which research of the target public and of the message precedes communication, as Bernays often practiced; and finally the ideal form, Two-Way Symmetric public relations, in which scientific persuasion not only affects the message to the public but also leads to evolution and modification within the communicating organization itself (Grunig, 2008). The evolution involved shows that "the value of public relations comes from the relationships that communicators develop and maintain with publics. … Symmetrical communication is especially important inside the organization where it helps to build a participative culture that, in turn, increases employee satisfaction with the organization" (Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002, p xi).

Grunig's Excellence Theory (Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002) proceeds from the four-way model in that to achieve such symmetrical and effective communication, public relations must be a strategic element of the organization, with a department and individual(s) empowered to play executive and high-ranking managerial roles integral to the planning and execution of the organization's overall functions.

> Excellent public relations units play an important role in the *strategic management* of their organizations. They identify critical publics that affect or are affected by management decisions and that can create issues or crises for the organization. Excellent public relations departments then *strategically plan, administer, and evaluate public relations programs* to communicate with their publics so that the organization can build and maintain good, long-term relationships with them. (p 539, emphases in the original)

Thus the theory calls for an ideal public relations that has the scope and responsibility to identify the needs and goals of the organization and then, after coming to understand its public(s) through rigorous and scientific investigation, adapt the organization as well as the message to best interact with the audience. This ideal prizes a managerial position that effectively is both a member of the leadership and a bridge between that executive suite and the public: a helicopter view of the organization within its milieu. Public relations under Grunig's theory (Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002) must balance the organization's mission and its environment so the organization selects and adheres to long-term strategies that function successfully in the latter.

> Because of the research they do or the interactions they have with external publics, public relations professionals can help to enact [a] global and rapidly changing environment. This is especially likely to happen when they are involved in the strategic management of their organization. Scanning is essential because it reduces uncertainty in the environment. (p 445)

Grunig argues that the two-way symmetrical model can build respect and empathy in both directions between the organization and its publics. The greater the uncertainty in the organization's environment, he posits, the more the need, development and benefit of symmetry, for it leads to fuller interchange of information. Besides improving communication, that familiarity avoids reprehensible behavior by the organization. Also, the better the use of the symmetrical model before a crisis, the better an organization can weather a crisis, even if it must resort temporarily to asymmetrical communication to do so (Grunig, J. 2001; Grunig, Grunig & Ehring, 1992; Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002; Grunig, J. & White, 1992 a; Grunig, J. 2008; Rattler8).

While the two-way symmetrical approach to communications is explicitly a theoretical construct (Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002), its impact on the industry has been extensive in the literature if not necessarily deep in practice. Dozier (& Boom, 1995) and others (eg Yeo & Sriramesh, Pysch & Pritchard 2009) have proposed and assessed applicability of the theory in the field, but others have questioned the actual influence, with Morris & Goldsworthy (2012) writing:

> Despite the [*Excellence Theory*] book's links to a trade

> association and attempts to turn theoretical thinking into material with practical value ... there is little evidence of the industry buying-in to the book and the ideas it seems to propagate. (p 28)

What role for former journalists under modern theory?

How former journalists fit into Grunigian theory is rarely addressed directly, except to segregate from strategic concerns the skills that some of Grunig's adherents ascribe to those trained as journalists. Prior to entering academia, Grunig studied to be an agricultural journalist and briefly reported and edited, even serving as a college newspaper sports editor, before preparing government reports and news releases for dissemination to journalists and others. His writings do not directly criticize or exclude former journalists, nor the skills from their previous career, but others who have built on his modern theory have divided public relations tasks in such a way as to value many or most journalistic skills as secondary, non-strategic duties.

Broom & Smith (1979) created the concept of practitioner roles in public relations, one of which Broom called the Communication Technician but which is better captured by his description of its inhabitants as "journalists-in-residence." Such practitioners' previous journalistic training provides public relations with what he treats as useful but limited experience, and associated skills, in mass media communications. Broom specifically ascribes no strategic authority to the Communication Technician: s/he is merely part of the implementation of decisions taken by management that includes only truly and solely strategic public relations practitioners.

Broom discovered (1982) in a survey of members of the Public Relations Society of America that in actual practice the technical and strategic roles proved usually intertwined. Practitioners often engaged in prescribing solutions, monitoring the problem-solving in relation to publics and actually facilitating the communication necessary to implement any solution. While he sought to exclude Communication Technicians from involvement in strategy, those who more precisely fit that lesser role still had a statistically significant presence in his other three roles: Expert Prescribers, Communications Facilitators and Problem-Solving Facilitators.

A similar survey (Ferguson, 1979, summarized in Dozier & Ehling, 1992) using the same body sought to organize practitioners not by roles but by norms ranging from problem-solver to journalist-technical communicator. Like Broom, Ferguson found concentrations but not exclusivity in practitioners' activities.

Dozier simplified the distinction by specifying only two main public relations roles: managers and technicians. The former handle all policy decisions and are accountable for success or failure; they treat themselves and are considered by the organization to be its communications and public relations experts. The latter have no role in managerial decision-making but rather "carry out the low-level mechanics of generating communication products that implement policy decisions made by others." (Dozier & Ehling 1992, p 333) The distinction between the former and the latter is also described as between strategists and tacticians (Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995).

Review of previous surveys confirmed these two roles and their distinctiveness (though the data applied only to practitioners within organizations, not consultants from outside firms). The technician role was identified with those who did not take part in developing new policies, specifically by not being involved in meetings and other activities where such policy is developed. Which group dominates in an organization depends on how hostile or changing its environment is: The more static it is, the greater the number and influence of technicians (Acharya, 1983 as cited in Dozier & Ehling, 1992). In addition, relatively heavier reliance on technicians is perceived as a sign of a less-evolved public relations operation, as Dozier & Ehrling say greater devotion of resources to the technician role is emblematic of organizations closer in style to the Press Agentry Model or at least a purely transmission-based Public Information Model.

Scanning and issues management

This role division applies not just to asymmetrical communications but also to the scanning and evaluation of organizations' environments that Grunig describes as being a crucial strategic element under his theory. Its "open-systems" approach calls for scientific analysis of environments (Okura &al, 2009). This new hunches-free public relations was codified by E.J. Robinson in his book *Public relations and survey research* (1969; New York: Meredith), which J. Pavlik summarized as a call for public relations to move away from "seat-of-the-pants approaches and toward 'scientific derived knowledge' (Pavlik, 1987, p 66)." (Watson, 2012, paragraph 22; also cited by Dozier, 1992) The open-systems approach requires a managerial, strategic application of scientific analysis.

But this expectation on the part of Grunig and others does not include details on how organizations can actually accomplish symmetry: which techniques, based on which skills, they should employ to assess and empathize with audiences, especially hostile ones. Further, Grunig (& al, 2002) notes the need for the precision of social science as a tool for surveying audiences, but no mention is made of where such training might come from, nor of who should receive it and how.

In particular, Grunig and others call for public relations operations to focus on scientific audience analysis, or, as noted before, "environmental scanning," to achieve such mind-meld with audiences as to realize symmetry, an endeavor otherwise known as issues management. Greening and Gray (1994) define issues management as "identifying, analyzing, and responding to social and political concerns that can significantly affect it" (p 467). Heath (1997) argues:

> The person who wants to be a vital part of the executive team needs to understand his or her industry well enough to know what changes can add costs or where business advantages. ... Often one or more members of the organization recognize the nature and seriousness of an issue and sell it to management. (p 81)

Heath does not identify who should be those members of the organization, other than to call them issues managers working in tandem with "key persons throughout the organization" (p 83). Besides "[s]trategic business planning with a vigilant eye to public policy trends," (p 82) he identifies three other functions that must be balanced for effective issues management: scanning, monitoring and analyzing the environment; effective communication; and sensitivity and adaptability to altering expectations of corporate responsibility.

Grunig also does not specify the skills necessary nor the best techniques for such scanning, but he cites (Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2002) Lauzen's research on the subject. Lauzen, who has co-written studies with Broom and especially Dozier, analyzed (1994) the "boundary leaping" activities involved in such scanning and concludes that because technicians lacked adequate strategic knowledge or influence, scanning is better done by managers. Her emphasis on such advice, and its acceptance, dilutes the discussion of the means of actually sounding out audiences, with only general description of issues management goals rather than actual practices or necessary skills to implement them, even in a study (1995b) that ostensibly designs a framework for an environment-scanning model by examining the practices at 16 organizations. Lauzen (1995a) also analyzes the effect of worldviews on issues management, but those worldviews are future- or past-orientation, not related to ethics, empathy or even curiosity, while skills related to actual audience interaction merit little attention on her part.

In a discussion of the Excellence Theory, James and Larissa Grunig (2010) note that the theory requires a technical, messaging or journalistic role as well as the predominant strategic managerial one, though again there is no discussion of the skills or background appropriate to such a function. Boudreaux (2005) takes the analysis a step further, explicitly assigning the task of environmental scanning to technicians. But hers is the exceptional departure from the orthodox finding under most Grunig-derived theory that journalistic abilities and skills are unrelated to the highest form of public relations.

Directly delimiting many former journalists, Grunigian theory also sets limits to advancement and success for public relations practitioners not trained in and oriented toward business skills. Broom & Dozier (as cited in Dozier, 1992) note that journalistic training does not provide the strategic-planning and impact-evaluation abilities necessary for management-by-objectives environments. Only in such environments, they argue, can public relations excel in its understanding and then accommodation to and affecting of specific publics' awareness, conditions, attitudes and behaviors. But DeSanto (2012) sees one benefit that could come from newsroom experience (but also boardroom politics): Those who are involved in strategic planning as part of the modern-theory public relations role should have the communication skills necessary to block encroachment or other power grabs by rival executives who lack such abilities.

Criticisms of modern theory

Criticism of Grunig's theory largely seeks not to return the discussion or the theory to pre-modern forms but rather questions the basis or applicability of his theory and its corollaries.

In terms of the basis of the theory, Grunig (2001) notes criticism (he cites Miller, 1989) that persuasion has been and should be the point of public relations, making it asymmetrical by default, but he counters that symmetry benefits organizations because their giving up some potential gains leads to greater gains for all. Cancel & Cameron (&al, 1997) dispute this mutual success, for the application of game theory rules out the likelihood of mutual satisfaction; their criticism also raises the concern that the organization risks loss of identity or message because of symmetry's required relativism. Grunig (2001) acknowledges that there are limits to accommodation, especially in cases where activists have forced confrontation and are uncooperative or adamant for what he calls reasons of illogic (he cites Leichty, 1997, for this criticism). But he counters that neither side can know the morality or reasonableness of the other side until they communicate.

All modern theory accepts that communication must involve some form of listening – often specifically naming issues management – by the organization's public relations force, as well as discourse.

But textbooks for the business education the strategists recommend instead prioritize, to the exclusion of a broader view of society, a highly specialized study of marketing and other business methods of evaluating markets (Alanko-Turunen, 2006) devoid of values and analysis of the mindset and reactions of a group or audience, especially one that is not a familiar customer base. Public relations textbooks tend to fall short in terms of both modern theory (Sallot &al, 2003) and research in the view of academics and public relations executives alike (DiStaso, Stacks & Botan, 2009), who join others in worrying about those tomes' limited instruction of basic rhetorical skills for public relations practitioners (Hardin & Pompper, 2004).

The effect of Grunig's theory and corollaries on practice

Despite such concerns and criticisms, modern theory has altered at least the ideal form and practice of public relations and such related fields as lobbying (Berg, 2009) around the globe over the past four decades, either directly or by triggering reactions such as the European Public Relations Book of Knowledge (Verčič, 2012).

In the United States, the emphasis on strategic communications shows up in public relations practitioners' views of themselves. A 2013 survey of 347 senior-level public relations/communications practitioners, out of more than 1000 respondents, found that 82% strongly agreed that “PR/COM should play a key role in defining identity and core values” and 45% felt the same way that “PR/COM should play a key role in defining overall business strategy” (USC Annenberg, 2014).

But only 40.1% said their organization had adopted that first key role, and a mere 13.6% the second. Further, just 18.9% strongly agreed that “[w]e are making increasing use of audience research,” with a median response from 1 to 7 of 4.01, while 23.5% felt likewise that “[s]enior management expects our primary focus to be on traditional media relations,” for a mean response of 4.08. Indeed, media relations was the top function/responsibility, with 92.8% of respondents citing it; issues management placed 12th, listed by 66%. No category among these functions/responsibilities ticked by more than 50% of respondents fit a mission like strategic development or management of communications (USC Annenberg, 2014).

This dichotomy is not exclusive to the United States. In Singapore as recently as 2005, the industry remained in “a pre-professional status,” the second of two studies confirmed, because practitioners were spending just under of a third of their time in managerial work and 62% on “technical” work (Yeo & Sriramesh, 2009). Analyses of the working days of managers and their subordinates showed both sets doing both forms of work and a lack of distinction between the duties and those handling them.

Agyemang’s defense (2007) of Ghanaian former journalists in public relations is a response to a call for application of modern theory in that country by Perry P.K. Ofosu, Vice President of the Institute of Public Relations, Ghana, who argues: “[J]ournalists have no training in putting together these holistic communication strategies that public relations practitioners do. PR is a strategic discipline" (paragraph 3) that journalists cannot understand.

Worldviews for journalism and public relations

Besides stressing strategic skills in public relations practitioners, Grunigian theory also adds to long-standing concerns about the attitudes and priorities journalists bring to public relations.

One principal concern in that orthodoxy is hard-to-shake (Phillips, 2002) journalistic worldviews that not only may limit potential for success in public relations but also underlie some of the hostility worldwide between current journalists and public relations practitioners, whether the latter be former journalists or not (DeLorme & Fedler, 2003; Tilley & Hollings, 2008; Neijens & Smit, 2006).

While addressing scantily the skills and experience necessary to scan an organization's environment, Grunig details the worldviews appropriate under his theory, granting the subject significant prominence in one of his main volumes (Grunig & White, 1992) developing it. After a broad review of the philosophy and history underlying and defining worldviews, he criticizes what he calls the asymmetrical worldview of past public relations, one in which communication is *done to* external targets as an organization seeks power and influence without being open to external influence, a model not different from journalistic information delivery. Instead, he endorses an approach based on an orientation toward nurturing and responsibility. In operational specifics, he argues that for practitioners to achieve excellence

> [a]n excellent worldview for public relations will be one that is logical, coherent, unified and orderly … effective in solving organizational and human problems, as judged by relatively neutral research and history … and ethical in that it helps organizations build caring – even loving – relationships with other individuals and groups they affect. (Grunig & White, 1992, p 338)

Those worldviews, he adds, should yield communications that are intelligible, truthful and emotional.

Modern theory's concerns can overlap with some of the worldviews generally accepted as belonging to journalists. For instance, Hafez (2002) describes truth and accuracy as among the most accepted worldviews for journalists in cultures as diverse as Germany, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia, while Deuze (2005) suggests that the principal values shared globally by journalists include public service to better reflect audiences' interests and needs.

But one journalistic worldview that is particularly separate from that of public relations is objectivity. As viewed by Lippmann (1922), objectivity allows a journalist to become aware of what he calls "stereotypes" that impose a type and generality on the world, and thus order it according to expectations. Being aware of his or her own stereotypes allows a journalist to be open to alternative possibilities, a Socratic means of objectifying the news, and thus discovering it dispassionately. Lippman expects journalists to depend on other institutions to provide expert knowledge that the journalist can assess using objectivity and thus inform the public dispassionately.

Objectivity runs counter to both the advocacy model and modern theory of public relations – so much so that some PR professionals consider it an insurmountable vestige for former journalists, handicapping them in public relations (Agyemang, 2011; Cain, 2011). The Grunig-led IABC Research Foundation's 1998 study found that strong pluralities of US and Canadian college graduate communicators had majored in journalism, and thus were schooled in objective news style and entered public relations with a mixed libertarian/social responsibility ethical framework that Dozier & Ehling (1992) describe as not conducive to a drive to maintain or change audience thinking.

McBride (1989) puts it most sharply, lambasting the "paternalism of the journalistic perspective on public relations [that] is evident throughout literature on mass communications ethics" and arguing that the half of public relations practitioners he estimates are former journalists bring a "narrow-minded" approach to the profession:

> How did journalistic objectivity become, inappropriately, the ethical standard by which public relations is measured? Is there an alternative ethical perspective more suited to advocacy and equally rooted in the profession's past? (all quotations, p 6)

Similarly, Bruning and Lambe (2008) identify relationship-building as crucial to worldviews that allow symmetrical public relations. While reporting is also based on relationship building in the form of interviewing and cultivation of sources, Bruning & Lambe report differently for public relations, though the only obvious distinction is in the editing for shared interests:

> [F]ocusing public relations activity on relationship-building moves the practice of public relations "away from a journalistic approach, in which the placing of publicity was the primary focus, into a management approach, in which the initiation, development, enhancement, and maintenance of mutually beneficial relationships … was of utmost importance" (Bruning & Ledingham, 2000a, p. 88). … Because the relational perspective requires that practitioners be more interactive with key public members, practitioners must understand (a) how key public members view the world, and (b) the ways in which key public member and organizational views are harmonic. (p 142-3)

Technician skills in public relations

If they are not reporting on organizations' audiences, what are former journalists doing in public relations departments? As noted, many are reported to be "journalists-in-residence," writing press releases, pitching articles to former colleagues and otherwise in the technician roles that modern theory assigns them.

A result since the arrival of modern theory has been a precipitous drop in communications skills among entrants into public relations (Berry, 2011) as narrow surveys this century show fewer entrants or aspirants with journalism experience or training (Hardin & Pompper, who also cite Wilcox &al, 2000). As a result, managers express growing concern about the writing and oral abilities of their new employees, many of them hired directly from university, where education in public relations has increasingly focused on modern theory-dictated business and strategic skills instead of writing (DiStaso Stacks & Botan, 2009; Hardin & Pompper, 2004).

The ability to write may have unexpected advantages as well, as Dozier (1992) found that technicians reported no lower job satisfaction than practitioners in managerial roles, despite the perceived higher status (and actual pay) for the latter because of their influence on policy. He wondered if that resulted from technical work's greater creative opportunities, which drew technicians to public relations in the first place. But another possibility is that they have a higher sense of their value to the organization than modern theory ascribes to them.

That creativity may only increase in any post-journalism era, for the Grunigs (2010) and others are looking to the Internet and social media as means for organizations to communicate directly with their publics, so that public relations practitioners can receive and transmit information directly and symmetrically, with no need for a news media as intermediary. While public relations is adapting only slowly (Grupp, 2010) to such a sped-up, news media-free model, if such a future required no journalists, it is an open question whether such communication might well require even greater journalistic skills on the part of public relations practitioners.

A single study discovered so far has attempted to explore these issues. In December 2012 Kimberly S. Delker completed a master's thesis that used mixed methods, but principally a qualitative study of 12 former journalists who had shifted to public relations. Her methods are addressed in the methodology section of this thesis. While acknowledging that her small sample size renders the findings not generalizable, Delker identifies two relevant themes:

- PR is basically an extension of journalism.
- Strategy can be learned.

Delker's interviewees said that they most appreciated those aspects of public relations that resembled those that they had liked in journalism: Ten noted that they enjoyed telling stories via public relations, eight relished informing the public, and seven cited meeting new and interesting people.

As reflected in the 12's preference for the more scrivenerly aspects of public relations, they were also unanimous that former journalists tend toward the tactical rather than strategic aspects of public relations, "meaning that they prefer tasks like writing, editing, or working with the media [vs] longer-term planning, strategic decisions, or more managerial roles" (pp 39-40). Only two described their jobs as involving any significant mix of strategic and technical work, and none was primarily involved in organization strategy, and Delker notes that the interviewees were "more of the lower- to mid-level public relations practitioners instead of managers or high-level executives" (p 40).

Delker's associated but limited quantitative study of managers echoes this greater comfort with technical aspects of public relations, with 93% saying their former journalists' foremost strength is writing ability; 91% said those charges' top assets are the ability to meet deadlines and knowledge of the media. But the majority of those managers, 75% of whom had worked as journalists during their careers, said former journalists were effective at strategic planning and thinking, with 19% grading their ability as "very good," 44% rating it "good," 34% having no positive or negative assessment and 16% deeming their strategic skills poor; in comparison, 13% said former journalists had a “very good” knowledge of the public relations industry, 42% said it was “good,” 29% said it was neither good nor bad, 16% deemed it poor.

Delker concludes:

> [T]he fact that so most managers consider journalists to have value in strategic planning is a positive finding for the individual employee’s personal development, the public relations organization they work for, and the state of public relations itself. (p 58)

Indeed, even the interviewees agreed that strategy can be learned, though how much so was unclear, apparently most of all to the interviewees themselves. In a study that usually presented numbers of respondents agreeing and disagreeing with specific points, Delker writes only:

> [o]thers say that they have gradually learned about the importance of strategy and research in public relations and are advocates for it in their organization […] For those who are currently performing some strategic duties in their job, they indicated that they learned about research and planning by experience. (p 54)

Methodology

The aim of this research

This study has sought to explore which of former journalists' skills public relations managers perceive to serve public relations and practitioners best, and which aspects of the past journalistic experiences provide the most lasting benefits or hindrances in public relations. It employed three research questions:

RQ1: **What specific skills do former journalists bring to and most use in public relations, and which necessary ones do they lack?**

RQ2: **In what roles in two-way symmetrical public relations can and do former journalists exercise skills and expertise from their previous profession (eg, and in particular, environmental scanning)?**

RQ3: **Do journalistic worldviews or other vestiges handicap former journalists in their new profession at any level, especially from serving in strategic roles?**

While best use and appreciation of skills serves both employer and employee (NCREL, 2003; NRC, 2001), only few general assessments (eg Broom & Smith, 1979; van Ruler, 2004) and one limited study (Delker, 2012) have examined carefully the views of public relations professionals, both managers and technicians, concerning success and satisfaction of former journalists in public relations. Much less is there any scholarly investigation of which skills or mind-sets aid or hinder the migrants in their new endeavor. Understanding the value and handicaps newsroom experience provides in public relations would allow exiting journalists to better judge their suitability for the profession while providing hiring managers some means to prioritize journalistic skill sets in terms of best fit and effectiveness in public relations as delineated by Grunig's general theory of public relations (Grunig & White, 1992).

Qualitative investigation

This study employed qualitative interviews with public relations professionals currently or formerly at for-profit enterprises or otherwise acutely image-focused organizations who hold strategic roles, as such positions are defined under Grunig's theory (Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, 1995; etc.), and who have worked extensively with former journalists, usually by supervising at least one.

Creswell (2014) defines qualitative research as an "approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" through, in one form, interviews that produce "data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data" (p 4). Pauly (1991) notes that "products and practices offer the raw materials, occasions, and metaphors for *commentaries* on mass communication" (p 5, emphasis in original).

Qualitative interviews can be structured, unstructured or, offering advantages of both, semistructured. While limiting flexibility, the fixed form and order of questions of structured interviews can minimize errors and interviewer influence while accentuating rational responses over emotional ones; unstructured interviews allow open-ended and in-depth input from extended questioning but thus require extensive access to the subjects (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Semistructured interviews, the form chosen for the bulk of this project, aim to bridge the strictures of the two forms, working from a set list of questions but encouraging free-form responses (Berger, 2000).

In all approaches, the results of the interviews are coded, or organized by theme or category, to permit analysis and lead to conclusions. Creswell argues that "the traditional approach in the social sciences is to allow the codes to emerge during the data analysis" (p 199).

While a bare minimum of 10 respondents (Brennen, 2013) might begin to provide findings adequate to suggest patterns of response to the research questions, usually far more are sought. Brennen (2013) and Berger (2000) argue that the interviewer will realize that the research has reached a conclusion when interviews begin to generate repetitious results.

Asking strategic managers about former journalists

On both theoretical and day-to-day bases, top managers of public relations departments at profit- and image-focused companies have a vested, and at times personally fiduciary, interest in their organization's public relations wants and needs. Their direct impact usually includes the hiring, tasking, reviewing, firing and advancement (or not) of their subordinates.

Under Grunig's general theory, such managers are expected to play the leading role in developing their organization's communications strategy and then overseeing its execution by the public relations department. Therefore, be they themselves former journalists or not, the executives in charge of such departments offer the most relevant, if highly subjective, view of the advantages and liabilities former journalists bring to public relations. What these managers consider useful and what they consider impediments determine former journalists' viability in their departments.

A significant constraint in choosing such managers as interview candidates is access and availability. By virtue of their high corporate rank and this project's qualification that they actively manage significant numbers of public relations practitioners, interviews with the subjects, even remotely, would be difficult to arrange, much more so in person, plus even those who might agree to take part could be expected to severely limit the time they grant to the project. Fontana & Frey (1994) emphasize the need to build close rapport with subjects to make possible the ultimate goal, at least in unstructured interviews, of *understanding* (emphasis in original, p 367). But the very nature of these executives' jobs limits such shadowing, in general and especially for a broad cross-section of departments necessary to draw conclusions, even at the level of particularity.

Profile of interview candidates

While bosses in all fields by definition evaluate their charges' activities and influence those subordinates' careers, this study prioritized public relations managers of for-profit entities. Besides the financial incentives such executives might have, which are designed to increase focus on specific metrics related to company performance, the reasons for preferring profit-oriented enterprises over non- and not-for-profits include the greater share of public relations activity in the for-profit sphere: For instance, a 2009

USC Annenberg Strategic Communication and Public Relations Center (SCPRC) survey, as reported by PRSA (2009), found that 61% of public relations professionals were employed by for-profit enterprises, while 27% worked for nonprofits and 13%[3] for government organizations. (The USC Annenberg [2014] results from a 2013 survey of senior level practitioners provided more segmented and less comparable results, at 32% public companies, 20% private, 20% nonprofit, 15% government agency and 13% other.) In addition, besides being very region-specific, the qualitative bulk of Delker's study (2012) addressed almost exclusively the work of former journalists at non- or, most of all, not-for-profit organizations.

Further, this study aimed to analyze public relations activities in services and consumer goods. This sectoral limitation aimed to facilitate comparisons among responses by managers at companies whose high visibility in marketplaces and before many publics, often entailing significant interaction with the news media, organized groups and individual citizens, ideally would require under Grunig's theory the use of two-way, symmetric communication, particularly to monitor their environments and accommodate their publics (Grunig & White, 1992).

To guard against findings colored solely by their own experiences, this project sought to interview executives/managers who were highly experienced former journalists and others with no journalism training whatsoever, though, as expected, many subjects proved to be at intermediary points of the spectrum. In the end, the division was nearly equal between former journalists and non-journalists, when including as non-journalists

[3] Presumably the figures were rounded.

the small number who had studied journalism but never practiced it.

To win the time and cooperation of these industry leaders, the researcher used his personal network to acquire where possible an “angel” or other agent to explain the value of this project to potential respondents in the angel’s network or company. These angels served as the corporate equivalent of the critical “insider” who Frey & Fontana (1994) describe as necessary for the researcher to cultivate (or her- or himself become) to attain access (p 367). Ideally, the invitational email was to be passed on directly by the intermediary, but this happened rarely; otherwise, the letter cited the intermediary by name.

Qualitative interviews by email

The interviewer’s and the interviewees’ locations complicated the possibility of face-to-face research other than with French companies. Further, the constraints on the executives’ high-value time required that the interviews take place in the most efficient and effective form possible.

With the increasing ubiquity, particularly among public relations professionals, of the Internet, social media and email, computer-based text research has become an option in qualitative research, much as telephone interviews did decades earlier (Sturges & Hanrahan 2004). Brennen (2013) argues that in-person interviews offer a rich context, both verbal and non-verbal, particularly in terms of social cues, and thus provide the best results for qualitative research. Researchers who use (Meho, 2006) or assess computer-based interviews (Houston, 2008; James & Busher, 2006; Evans, Elford & Wiggins, 2008) do not dispute the point but have found evidence that the quality of data obtained by email can be comparable, or of equal value, to that of in-person, face-to-face interviews, and at a minimum comparable with that gained through postal or telephone interviews (Coderre, 2004; Curasi, 2001). Some researchers (eg Mann & Stewart, 2000; O'Connor & Madge, 2001) argue that constraints on access to subjects at times compel use of novel forms of interview, with Fontana & Frey (1994) citing Douglas' (1985) championing how "interviewing and interviewers must necessarily be creative, forget 'how-to' rules, and adapt themselves to the ever-changing situations they face" (p 368). Mann & Stewart (2000) specifically note that for interviewees "such as high-level executives, it is the time element which is crucial" to blocking in-person or even synchronous oral interviews (p 20). James & Busher (2006) echo this advantage more generally:

> Email also offered us the opportunity to "interview" participants individually, necessary for exploring their discrete views of their developing professional identities and life histories in a variety of different macro and organizational cultures. (p 406)

Besides potentially increasing access and data in ways that also apply to such synchronous techniques as telephone interviews (Sturges & Hanrahan 2004), asynchronous email interviews offer other advantages over oral techniques. Because the questions are delivered as text only, email limits interviewer bias caused by verbal and visual cues (Selwyn & Robson, 1998), and the form's immediate and complete text of the interview removes the risk of transcription bias, in which incomplete records might truncate coding and limit conclusions, as well as transcription error, based on accent, speech or quality of recording (Mann & Stewart, 2000). Further, Lindlof (1995, as cited in Mann & Stewart, 2000) argues that the immediate presence of a full transcript makes best use of contextual memory by providing at once the entire text but only the text, removing background clues like visual or aural information that could favor one result over another for reasons other than content.

In a related benefit, the use of email reduces but does not eliminate the situation effect (as in “neutral” vs. “natural” setting) (Gaiser 1997, as cited by Mann & Stewart, 2000) by putting the choice of setting (Meho, 2006) and timing (Mann & Stewart, 2000) largely in the hands of the subject.

In other advantages, Illingworth (2001) found that the related distance inherent between researcher and subject in computer-based qualitative interviews encouraged and freed subjects to participate when they might otherwise resist. (That said, Illingworth concludes that the loss of other inputs outweighs such benefits, though she references liberally studies that argue differently.) Other investigations have found that text interviews shorten full response and research times relative to projects using oral interviews (James & Busher 2006), but not all, with Adriaenssens & Cadman (1999) differing and also noting that asynchronous interviewing allows the researcher to modify and enhance questionnaires while research is underway. Email also permits not just asynchronous interviews with individuals but also simultaneous research with multiple subjects (Meho, 2006), allowing access to a broader sample of subjects without regard to geography or related limitations (Houston, 2008; Curasi, 2001).

Selwyn & Robson (1998) support email research as a means to democratize the exchange of qualitative data by allowing greater reach, which would seem to be even truer now that are to be nearly 3 billion people Internet users by the end of 2014 (ITU, 2011). Selwyn & Robson also cite Boshier on another form of equality:

> Email appears to provide a context for the kind of non-coercive and anti-hierarchical dialogue that Habermas claimed constitutes an "ideal speech situation", free of internal or external coercion, and characterised by equality of opportunity and reciprocity in roles assumed by participants (Boshier 1990, p. 51). (section 3)

Finally, email interviews, well used, can permit a researcher to develop an insider role. Because the interview can be closer to the relevant activity even if the researcher is not directly present or involved, email can increase access and thus data (O'Connor & Madge, 2001).

James and Busher (2006) worry, though, about the interviewer's ability to control an email interview, noting the need to ensure that subjects, who are writing without immediate feedback, do not stray from the research themes. That very lack of control, however, allows respondents to reintroduce some cues similar to those common to face-to-face interviews. Forms of net-iquette permit both interviewer and interviewee to enrich their meanings through use of not-purely textual cues, such as capitalization, fonts, colors, Internet-specific abbreviations, even emoticons and other visual insertions (eg GIFs) (Opdenakker, 2006; Selwyn & Robson, 1998; Salmons, 2012).

But email interviews carry other operational negatives besides loss of context and nontextual cues, starting with the limited impact of unsolicited emails in crowded inboxes (Selwyn & Robson, 1998) or because of spam filters and other controls. O'Connor & Madge (2001) point out the risk of unseen external distractions affecting the interview, while James & Busher (2006) note that researchers have no means of verifying that the respondent is indeed the person intended or the signatory of the response, potentially a significant concern in public relations, where the writing of text attributed to another person is common (eg Delker, 2012). Curasi (2003), however, considers identity checks more certain in email interviews than in other non-face-to-face techniques.

Initial approaches for the interviews

Because of the limited availability of the interviewees, the researcher's and subjects' disparate locations, and the need for broad input, among other conditions, this project used asynchronous email interviews, in which the first and principal round of research asked the managers/executives to reply to a mix of structured and semistructured questions in the form of an emailed text or web-accessed questionnaire. In select cases where the interviewee provided permission and access for follow-up questions, semistructured phone and email interviews provided further input.

Interviewees were promised confidentiality, with any descriptors limited to no more than title, industry sector, whether the interviewee ever studied or practiced journalism, and general number of reports and the share of former journalists among them. Each identified interviewee will be provided with an executive summary of this research as well as the full study upon its final approval by the University of Missouri.

Respondents were approached through three methods. First, the researcher reached out via email, phone and direct contact to members of his own network, save for employees of energy companies with whom he has never had a professional relationship.[4] Besides asking for responses from those few direct contacts who fit the profile of interviewees, this canvassing mainly took the form of asking others, particularly those in executive posts at appropriate companies, usually multinationals, to identify and approach or recommend candidate sources. Through this networking and after winnowing out inappropriate nominees, inquiries went sent via the intermediary but more usually directly to a dozen current or recent top public relations executives at North American and West European enterprises.

The second effort involved a Web-based review of self-reported titles and career history for public relations managers, especially as posted with the professionals-oriented social media site LinkedIn.com.

Candidates were invited via one of two emailed cover letters (see Appendix): one letter was used when a contact had recommended the candidate, with the other applied to "cold call" approaches; both feature a description of the project to build interest, with the latter including a minimal amount of autobiographic information to increase buy-in (Curasi, 2001, citing Moon, 2000). For LinkedIn candidates not otherwise in communication with the researcher or reachable directly through his network, the limits of the website's internal messaging service InMail required use of a very condensed version of the letter (see Appendix), with further material provided if the recipient

[4] At the request of his own manager, who cited enterprise conventions barring the use of work-related resources for any outside educational activities, the researcher, who works in public affairs for an intergovernmental energy-related policy organization, did not recruit public relations leaders at energy firms.

expressed interest.

Emails encouraged “snowballing,” as in requesting interviewees to recommend or even recruit further subjects (Creswell, 2014). However, this proved of very limited value, both by expanding responses beyond ideal candidates and because the researcher knew of only two viable candidates who were reputed to have agreed to contribute -- but did not themselves confirm participation, which would have facilitated identification -- but only one unaccounted-for response fit the timing and background likely for those expected respondents.

Logistics of the interviews

The questions were provided as simple text at the bottom of the cover letters, as an attached Word document and via a SurveyMonkey page that was hyperlinked in the letter. Meho (2006) reports that embedded questions, as opposed to attached files, generate up to five times as high response rates. Given that he cites a 2000 study by Dommeyer & Moriarty for evidence on this point, though, increases in recipients’ familiarity with email and attachments may have rendered that finding obsolete. In this research, however, only one of 23 responses returned the Word document filled-out, while three answered the questions as simple text in a reply-to-sender email, in two the cases helpfully distinguishing the responses by text color or italics. (For ease of coding and calculation, the researcher entered the emailed responses into the SurveyMonkey database, distinguishing the source and manipulation.)

This first wave resulted in a 50% response rate after the researcher declined offers of data from or concerning potential respondents who did not fit the profile. The four direct responses included one in French (out of three emails sent in both French and English), while four others reported having completed the survey via SurveyMonkey, in all but one case being identifiable by when they sent the confirmation and connection between their histories and responses.

Snowballing proved largely unsuccessful, and where it seems to have taken place, was largely or completely anonymous, with numerous correspondents, from within the researcher's network and mostly beyond, reporting that they had passed along the interview request but not knowing or providing information that allowed for identifying the respondent. In the end, this resulted in responses from managers who have worked currently or very recently solely at not-for-profits, three listed institutions of higher learning, ranging from a liberal arts college to one of the 100 largest US universities, and one nonprofit, a community development lending association in one of the largest US metropolitan areas. (A few other respondents' work histories included communications management positions at entities that appeared to not be profit-oriented.) As the four represented 17% of total respondents, less than the usual share of public relations professionals according to the PRSA report (2009) and the latest USC Annenberg survey (2014), their responses were retained, and were counted separately or excluded whenever discussion pertained only to for-profit entities or strategic management findings.

The second means of canvassing respondents was via social media, begun two months after the network canvassing. Besides the researcher's own effort via LinkedIn, members of his network were encouraged to reach out via Twitter and Facebook plus their own LinkedIn networks. This effort generated minimal usable results, perhaps in part because it requested that candidate respondents contact the researcher directly, in order to avoid data from sources who did not fit the desired profile.

The third effort was unsolicited requests to professionals found on the Internet. Using LinkedIn, corporate websites and membership lists of public relations organizations, the researcher sent nearly 100 requests. LinkedIn proved the most fertile field, via temporary use of a premium membership's access to strangers' profiles that in a number of cases listed personal or professional email addresses. Where those addresses were not listed, the researcher used InMail to send the very short requests for participation. The response rate was, predictably, low, but all 10 individuals who agreed to provide input were nominally ideal sources as defined under Grunig's theory, with such titles as Vice President and Managing Director.

Because the subjects could see the questions upon receipt and during response, they were able to answer at once or in intervals, allowing them to reconsider, correct and perfect the material for "a closer fit between ideas, intentions and their expression in writing" (Meho, 2006). The amount of time taken by those who answered in email or Word form is unknown, but SurveyMonkey records the login time for the final online completion of the interview (respondents can access the questions and prepare answers outside of that time). Of those who filed directly to SurveyMonkey, time spent during the submission visit (which of course does not necessarily indicate total time spent solely on replies) averaged just under 19 minutes, ranging from 2:03 to 34:25 and with the median login lasting 12:45.

The shortest visit also yielded the tersest reply in terms of words filed, at 51, but the longest duration resulted in 308 total words, not significantly more than the average respondent. Word counts for interviews ranged from that 51 to 910, averaging 260 per respondent. The person entering the most data spent 19:19 on the site.

In some cases, there were significant delays between initial contact or recommendation and receipt of responses, which led to gaps and overlap among the three campaigns for input. James & Busher (2006) note that they were often surprised by the arrival of responses, but they found they were able to use lags for related or other research.

> Prompt replies, we discovered, were not actually necessary, particularly when slower ones gave opportunity for more powerful reflection on the main focus of the studies. (p 13)

In total, 23 responses were admitted as appropriate data for this research, upon confirmation -- or in one case, credible self-reporting -- that the respondent held a title or responsibility in keeping with Grunig's description of a strategic communications executive. Interviewees included at least the regional or country head, current or former, for public relations or corporate/strategic communications at no fewer than nine Fortune Global 500 companies, as well as a cross-section of other companies that included at least three European blue-chip multinationals and two (US) Fortune 1000 companies. US-headquartered companies dominated, though responses came from at least three executives at such firms with oversight of country or regional activities outside of North American and one outside of the United States. Respondents were based in at least seven countries on three continents. Nevertheless, the majority were native English speakers, though mostly polyglot, and while the questions were offered in German and Italian as well as French, only one respondent preferred to use another language (French, as above; the English translation of responses was provided to that individual). Gender skewed slightly more male, at 11 of the 22 identifiable respondents, counter to the 63% share of women among American public relations specialists, as defined by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, and 59% of managers (Khazan, 2014).

Findings

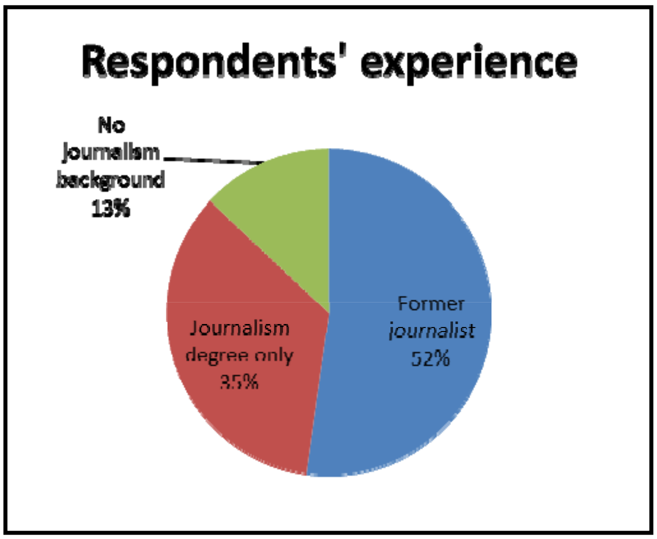
Review of data

Twenty-three viable respondents took part in the research over a period of nearly 10 months. Following the closure of data collection, the researcher engaged in an extended and repeated reading of the information, a “long preliminary soak” as recommended by Hall (1975), and then employed open coding on a line-by-line analysis, taking detailed notes and color-coding the responses, all the while efforting to avoid preconceived ideas about themes, before using axial coding to begin assembling results derived from the data.

> Open coding, where the raw data (e.g., interviews, art, fieldnotes) are broken down so that as many ideas and concepts as possible are identified and labeled, sets the stage for axial coding, where the data are reassembled so that the researcher may identify relationships more readily. To do this, the researcher attempts to flesh out the properties of categories and determine how they vary in terms of their dimensions. (Benaquisto, p 51)

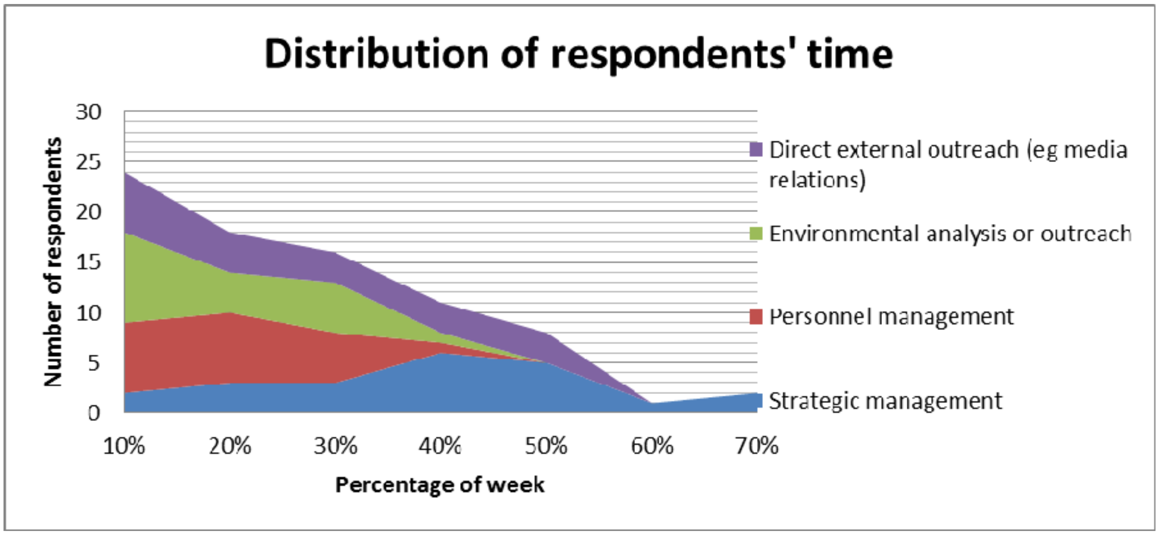
For listing of skills, the coding took the form of constant comparison analysis, which followed the rereading of the data involved and identified “chunks” or phrases, assigning each a code after analyzing existing codes to determine overlap or redundancy and thus making a comparative analysis. Then the codes were combined to organize them by their applicability to journalism or public relations as well as neither or both. Word count analysis also contributed to revealing intensity, improving the rigor of the analysis. Finally, use of keywords-in-context-analysis exposed how certain phrases were used in context, in particular repetition of verbs or adjectives in relation to specific skills or abilities, present or lacking, in former journalists (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

More generally, the axial coding included grouping each specific datum from responses by whether it reflected positively or negatively in terms of former journalists' abilities, contributions, hindrances or possible success in public relations.



Sources of the research's data

This research sought a mix of former journalists and non-journalists; particularly in the last stage of data collection, invitees were selected between former journalists and non-journalists in an effort to maintain a previously fortuitous even rate of responses between the two groups. The first, structured question sought confirmation of the respondents' journalism background or lack thereof. Among the 23 qualifying respondents, all 23 self-reported their training and experience, with 12 (52.2%) saying they had worked as journalists, three (13%) holding a journalism degree but never having been a professional journalist, and eight (34.8%) having never studied nor practiced journalism. Many expanded on their responses in both the initial round of questioning and in follow-up interviews, either with synopses of their occupational history or by providing qualifications, such as one self-categorized non-journalist who listed 10 years as a (corporate) communications officer at a newspaper (ie, not in the newsroom) and another who reported having worked for her college and high school newspapers.

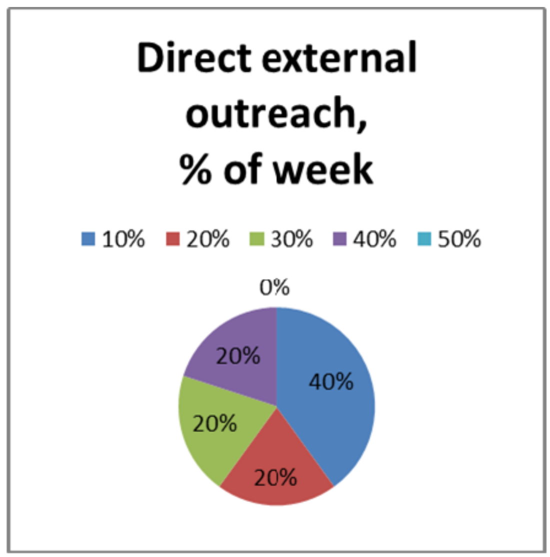


To determine a subject's present responsibilities in terms of Grunig's theory, the next structured questions built on past studies of public relations activities, which Broom (1982) used to categorize practitioners' principal roles as technical or strategic, and to generally assess their managerial portfolio and history as it relates to use of former journalists. The research sought to limit responses to those whose job title or description qualified them as strategic managers under Grunig's Excellence Theory, but each respondent was asked to self-describe how s/he allocated work time in an average week among four responsibilities:

- strategic management
- personnel management
- environmental analysis or outreach
- direct external outreach (eg media relations)

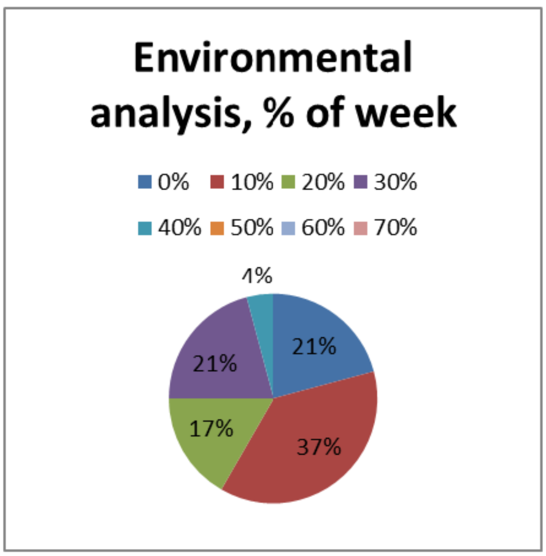
Despite their titles, no respondent reported spending more than 70% of her or his time on strategic management, and just two (9.1%), a former Vice President and a current

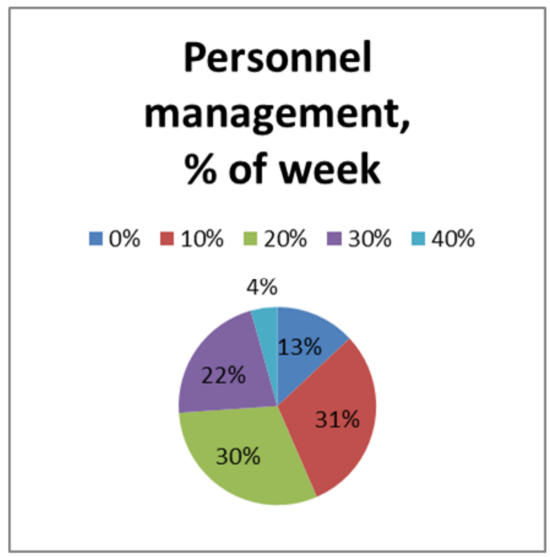
Assistant Vice President, both for communications, at for-profit companies, said they spent that much of their time on the function; one (4.6%) reported 60%. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the former head of communications at a defense procurement enterprise and a university communications chief said they spent 10% or less time on strategic management, and three (13.6%) each gave it 20% or 30% of their week. The largest share, 11 managers, said they gave 40% to 50% of their time to strategic management. One respondent, head of a firm tasked with European corporate communications for a US-based software giant, declined to break down his time, writing, "I am not familiar in this context with the term ‘environmental analysis or outreach.’ ” The average was just over 40% of the week spent on strategic communications, with not-for- and nonprofit respondents all at or below the mean.[5]



[5] Percentages vary not only because several respondents ascribed no part of their week to at least one of the four categories, as the question permitted, but because eight of the 22 did not allocate the full 100%, in most cases listing another use of time under the “other” category, eg “administrivia” and “administrative / non-productive management time (useless meetings, managing calendar, purchasing, forms, etc.)” Also, some respondents gave more precise figures either by email or in a note on the SurveyMonkey page. More problematic, two attributed more than 100 percentage points; their results were recalibrated to place each activity in the appropriate band.

While they devoted less time to strategic management than Grunig's Excellence Theory posits, they did fit the theory in spending little time on direct external media outreach (aka in the practitioner role), with four (17.4%) allocating none of their week to such work and six (26.1%) spending less than 10% of their time on it. No respondent gave it more than 50% of his or her time, but three (13%) each marked 30%, 40% and 50%, and four (17.4%) listed up to 20%, resulting in a mean of just under one-fifth of the average respondent's week. Those outside of the for-profit sector listed higher-than-average time spent on external outreach, including two of those marking 50%.





Environmental analysis easily consumed the least time, with a single (4.3%) top respondent reporting spending 40% of his or her week on the function, nine (39.1%) reporting 10% or less and five allocating no time at all to environmental analysis, the same number who listed up to 30%. Four devoted 20% to the task. Personnel management also took up relatively little of respondents time, with three (13%) allocating it no time, and seven (30.4%) each giving it 10% or 20%, five (21.7%) devoting 30% of their time to it and just one (4.3%) spending 40% of the average week on personnel matters, the highest share.

While the managers were implicitly encouraged to discuss former journalists' work regardless of whether those examples were direct reports, the research sought to determine managers' familiarity with former journalists by determining how many they had supervised directly. First, respondents were asked how many public relations practitioners they have managed. Despite the formulation of the question, almost all provided current, absolute figures, ranging from zero to 200 -- allowing direct comparisons -- save two who gave ranges for current subordinates, which were averaged, and one who provided no figure (and so was excluded). The mean was just under 40 direct reports, with the median 11, though these figures are minimums, as they do not include most respondents' past reports. As for the work experience of subordinates, one respondent (4.5%) reported having managed no former journalists; s/he was among nine (40.9%) who said that less than 10% of the practitioners they have managed were former journalists. Twelve (54.5%) said that former journalists made up 10%-30% of the practitioners they have overseen, while one (4.5%) each said 31%-60% or more than 90% have been journalists. None selected 61%-90%.

Among those former journalists, most were minimally involved in developing strategy. A strong majority (65%) of the 20 managers responding to the query of what share of those former journalists helped develop strategy said that no more than 30% were involved, and more than half of that share (six, or 30%) said less than 10% took part. But three respondents (15%) said more than 90% of former journalists helped provide strategy, with an equal number saying that 31% to 60% took part. One (5%) said 61%-90%. (Of course these results do not include the 50% of respondents who are former journalists themselves.)

What the managers seek in public relations practitioners

This research addressed three research questions, with the results summarized in these Findings, along with select quotes from participants.

To address the first research question (RQ1), **What specific skills do former journalists bring to and most use in public relations, and which necessary ones do they lack?**, managers were first asked about which qualities they seek in job candidates, particularly in terms of strategic planning ability for public relations.

Only two of the 20 (10%) who listed qualifications did not include a journalism-related skill among those they said they seek when hiring. Five (25%) said they look for public relations skills or experience, and two among those five, neither a former journalist, specifically preferred candidates with such a background. One of those two, a former Senior Communications Manager of an information technology company and then Managing Director for communications at an insurer wrote, “Job candidates often do not have experience in PR strategic planning, so if they have that background, it is a leg up for them over the other candidates.” The other, a head of public relations for a European financial services company and before that a national stock exchange, was more pointed, seeking "[a]n understanding that PR is about long term organisational reputation and is not a short term sales & marketing fix."

But four other respondents explicitly favored journalism experience, with one seeking “[c]reative thinking and ability to think outside the PR box; people who do not have PR degrees."

In general, most respondents stressed that they sought broad qualifications and versatility over specific public relations or journalism experience. Not that the latter sets were not important: only one respondent (5%) did not list a single quality associated with either calling. But overall ability and adaptability rated higher than occupational qualification, and certainly outpaced either training in particular. The majority preferred candidates with skills that apply to both journalism and public relations, or could apply as well to other communications work. A former Vice President and Corporate Communications Director at an advertising multinational wrote that the ideal candidate can "understand the news/strategic implications to be able to advise leadership." The former Senior Communications Manager of an information technology company and now Managing Director for communications at an insurer said, "Industry experience and journalism experience can be very beneficial to creating and executing communications strategy." A Senior Director for global communications at a business services company explained:

> In two words, I look for strategic pragmatists. First, I think it's important that people are able to dive deep into strategic issues -- the ability to link communications goals and objectives directly to a firm's goals and objectives. But I also like someone who, once the strategy has been debated and decided, can roll up his/her sleeves and work hard to make the deliverables shine, whether they are press releases, social

media extensions, leveraging initiatives to Sales, etc.

Polyvalent qualifications, at 37 listings out of the total 76 coded descriptions of qualities sought in job candidates, especially in terms of strategic planning, were the plurality (48.7%) of listed skills, with 21 others (27.6%) associated specifically with journalism and 16 (21.1%) public relations. The single quality most often cited, at nine specific mentions (11.8%), was familiarity with news or journalism, closely followed by coded responses categorized as analytical skills and desirable personality traits, both at six mentions (7.9%), with neither deemed associated specifically with either profession. Also not tied to public relations or journalism was analytical ability, which placed a spot behind (6.6%) but rose to 11 total mentions (14.5%) upon inclusion of contextless “judgment” or a similar term. In an example of such a skills listing, a former head of communications in government and education-related services described a strong candidate thusly: "Someone who has a good sense of how things will develop. Someone who can look beyond the current news cycle."

All industry non-specific traits trailed media familiarity, especially if including digital or social media, though journalism skills were explicitly cited only five times (6.6%), with writing at four mentions (5.3%). Specific experience in public relations, at four (5.3%) and in corporate settings, three (3.9%), both trailed strategic skills, at six (7.9%), among skills directly associated with a public relations background.

Where experience matters, some respondents followed, wittingly or not, Broom’s lead and distinguished between public relations practitioners and strategists, but this was rare. One unidentified former journalist who reported managing 10 practitioners, less than 10% of them fellow former journalists, distinguished by role:

> It depends on the job I am hiring for: I have hired copywriters for whom journalism experience is a big plus[,] and web content directors, for whom journalism experience is not necessary. In terms of strategic planning, I look for a person who understands the mission: whether it's selling cars or keeping a low profile in a volatile time.

A Communications Director at an infrastructure manufacturing company distinguished not by activity but by rank and seniority:

> In terms of strategic planning, broad business-oriented thinking, not just limited [to] how to get media coverage. For more junior roles: strong organizational skills, an unflappable, can do attitude.

But for the most part, like the executive who appreciated a PR professional who can "roll up his/her sleeves," managers sought both journalistic and strategic qualities in all candidates. One Director of PR at a finance company listed as desired traits: "Journalistic skills and training; strategic communications ability...."

Among their actual employees who were journalists, or among former journalists with whom they have interacted, managers prized journalistic experience and instinct highly. A typical, wide-ranging but journalistic-centered description of such a hire or colleague came from a Senior Manager for corporate communications at a global automaker: "Understanding of how the media works, industry experience, fluency in corporate topics, good human being, good results-driven work ethic, great attitude, fun."

Among 79 coded qualities that managers listed as exercised by former journalists once hired, the most cited was the ability to pitch a story, at 15 specific mentions (19%), with terms that related to familiarity with journalistic practices or newsroom practitioners lodging a further 12 mentions (15.2%). News judgment was cited six times (7.6%). For example, the chief handling European corporate communications for the software multinational, a multidecade journalist, cited as critical attributes in practitioners "writing skills, ability to understand 'audience', understanding the business we're in, digital creativity." The Senior Director of communications at the business services company, a non-journalist, summed up the view:

> I've found that former journalists bring the ability to slice through the clutter and really help a company decide when there is news -- and when there is not. Both are important. [...] If there is no news, a former journalist can be helpful in shaping something to BE newsworthy. [...] It is the ability -- and skill -- to create news when nothing is apparent that reflects a former journalist's creativity and, again, his or her link strategically to the business they support.

Respondents were asked not to consider as capacities writing skills or media contacts; nevertheless, these advantages were often noted, with compositional ability explicitly cited five times (6.3%) with almost all such mentions accompanied by an explanation of the interviewee's need to point out the value of this journalism-related ability despite instructions. Writing skills were further referenced obliquely through multiple kudos to former journalists for such expertise as speedy composition or strong storytelling abilities. Respondents were more careful not to list media contacts explicitly, but they acknowledged that access repeated with such comments as “an understanding of which media you should use for different audiences.”

For instance, the head of communications for the division of an aerospace-defense company rattled off both sets of qualities without actually directly citing either through a quick summary of the benefits of employing former journalists: “Technical proficiency. Deadline driven. Work ethic/speed. Great at building relationships with all types. Great storytellers.”

Analysis was a critical quality among former journalists already in public relations, with eight mentions (10.1%) of good news judgment but also four (5.1%) that addressed former journalists’ more general ability to discern wheat from chaff and five responses (6.3%) addressing their extra-corporate perspectives and propensity to ask incisive questions or otherwise investigate a plan or pattern, insightfulness that was explicitly attributed to the journalistic training. The Director of Strategic Communications at another leading aerospace-defense company, previously head of communications at governmental, financial and medical enterprises, explained the benefits:

> An understanding of how journalism works: deadlines, what makes a story a good story, what will make a story better. In a business environment, we often are told to “PR this” to help sales, etc., irrespective of the news value. Former journalists

> have the best understanding and most credibility in judging the newsworthiness of that topic. They are best equipped to say "sorry, that won't fly and here's why" to the organization – which is an incredibly useful skill! Also, former journalists tend not to shy away from the tough questions and are better and more quickly able to develop a rapport with journalists.

In no case did a respondent judge a former journalists' tendency to "speak truth" to be a pure negative. Rather, it was usually perceived as at least helpful, as the public affairs officer for a leading US education services company put it:

> Since they have been on the outside looking in and writing about organizations or higher education from the "other side," they bring a unique perspective. This experience and knowledge can be of great use to a PR office.

Other significant positives that respondents listed were the ability to elicit more information (three mentions, or 3.8%) as they reshaped information (five, 6.3%) for best dissemination.

What journalists lack or must unlearn for success in public relations

Journalists enter public relations with advantages, but their managers also see steps they must take to adapt successfully to their new work.

For instance, while no manager solely complained about pointedly incisive or non-corporate speech by former journalists, instead usually praising it as a useful contribution to successful communications, several nevertheless expressed concern about how journalists express themselves. The unidentified manager, a non-journalist, presented the issue more as a mixed comparison with non-journalist peers:

> [T]he PR people I have worked with who are not former journalists, in my opinion, are less likely to question the company line, which can be a good thing as well as a bad thing. So the non-journalists may be less likely to identify and less capable of evaluating a communications issue. The non-journalists, however, are more likely to understand the importance of keeping quiet when needed.

Indeed, former journalists' questioning can go too far, in several managers' views. "They need to learn when to turn on and and [sic] when to turn off their scepticism," wrote the infrastructure-services manager. "They need to learn how to operate in an often complex organizational environment."

As a result, the director of public relations at another finance company said that by comparison "nonjournalists probably have better corporate accumen [sic] in general and know how the company operates -- they can get things done a little more effectively in the corporate environment."

The defense and financial services manager concluded that journalists "need to learn how to become more political animals internally and be diplomats externally, not to mention tone down the swearing!"

A single respondent, the IT and insurance manager, however, saw former journalists as meeker than their non-journalist colleagues. This non-journalist said that former journalists, in comparison with their non-journalist peers, are "not as vocal or aggressive, at times. That can be a good thing, to balance out a team with a different view and approach."

Several managers mentioned that journalists need to learn how to handle multiple simultaneous challenges upon entering public relations. The manager from the government and education sectors wrote:

> Former journalists can sometimes become flustered when there is more than one challenge to confront. In offices where you have to handle rapid response on multiple issues, I have seen former reporters who are clearly uncomfortable and not experienced with having to manage a crisis.

Once a reporter, always a reporter?

To address RQ2, **In what roles in two-way symmetrical public relations can and do former journalists exercise skills and expertise from their previous profession (eg, environmental scanning)?**, managers were asked about which journalistic skills migrants still utilized in terms of outreach and other interaction with target publics. While they answered at length about writing skills, story pitches and other skills related to activities more appropriate to one-way and even public-agentry public relations models as defined by Grunig, few directly addressed issues management or environmental scanning, despite the hint in the question and the mention of theory in the cover letters. Not one respondent, including pre-testers, cited Grunig's or any other theory or school of thought by name (as opposed to specific public relations pioneers) despite prompting by context. This despite some of the respondents' having university public relations training, even at the graduate level. Further, the vocabulary for such external and outreach activities, which was expanded significantly and repeatedly over the course of the research, often was unfamiliar to respondents. In fact, in a response similar to that of the software company's external chief handling European communications, one of the very first respondents, the head of public relations for a university, wrote simply, "I think I value issues management. The term environmental analysis is virtually meaningless to me. I find this question a big [sic] opaque."

Others responded to the question more broadly, defining their or their organization's use of environmental scanning as though it were a universal or at least organizational skill, not specific to any class of practitioner. The insurer's Assistant Vice President for strategic communications, a former journalist, wrote of the value of such outreach as simply a quality: "Ability to listen and identify issues early."

But, as prompted, some respondents did address journalists' ability to scan environment in terms of messaging. They specifically discussed how journalists reach out to and read publics, but not always positively.

The Communications Manager for a community development financial institution, a former journalist, maintained that "journalists think about impact, about outcomes, about connecting."

The manager for the advertising multinational, a non-journalist, said, "Former journalists seem to have a more practical approach in reaching target groups. Employees from corporate comms, for example, can more easily get lost in structure, planning and organizational efforts."

Similarly, the Managing Director for communications of a public relations firm wrote a comparison among practitioners applicable both to scanning and overall public relations operations: "Those with a jounalism [sic] background are able to gather, evaluate and act on information at a quicker pace than non-journalists ... Non-journalists tend to have stronger community ties that provide nuance and depth to communication issues."

Others discussed environmental scanning more generally, not necessarily in terms of former journalists but as it applies to the entire enterprise. The resources-services manager wrote:

> Periodic formal surveying is useful but the most important skill is listening. Listening to customers, to prospects, to sales people, to investors. Always have the antenna up for insights that can help steer a program.

The business-services sector manager addressed the issue in terms of the advantages of former journalists bring with their inquisitive natures:

> [T]he most important skills I've found are collaboration and fearless inquiry. Collaboration because, IMHO, Corporate Communications adds little value as a function if it is operating in an ivory tower. It adds value only when it is linked with Market (external communications), HR (internal communications), etc. And fearless inquiry is important, although usually

> learned over time. It is always preferable, IMHO, to set a meeting with a Marketing leader or even the CEO (I have supported both in my career!) to ensure alignment with strategies...raise questions...etc. I've found they respect that kind of outreach, which once it occurs can lead to even more targeted and "on-message" deliverables coming out of Corporate Communications teams.

Not surprisingly, and in keeping with the findings for RQ1, the public that former journalists are thought to know best and best read are other journalists. As one of the information-technology sector managers wrote:

> They know how to "hook" journalist [sic] with the right messages.
>
> They know how journalist [sic]work, how little time they have, how they don't have time (sometimes) to do full scale research, and how information has to be packaged to be truly useful to them.
>
> They know the right tone of voice to use.
>
> They know how to move away from the corporate lingo and speak in a tone of voice that will be appropriate to a journalist audience.

But, some managers saw the newsroom strengths that journalists bring to preparing and pitching communications as single-dimensional. The Global Consumer Communications and Public Relations Lead at the technology company said:

> [E]x-journalists know better how to present the information and how to give messages that will resonate with journalists. They just know the audience better. However they often only know a narrow area (the one that they worked in.)

The Assistant Vice President for Strategic Communications at a manufacturing multinational explained, “Former journos tend to think external first and sometimes external only. I have to make them focus on other constituencies.” Or the problem may be, as the public relations’ firms communications Managing Director suggested, that former journalists lack the means of employing an external vision effectively, in that “[t]hey have to learn to see beyond a single news story, and learn how to frame the narrative.”

Some managers suggested that former journalists might not even be appropriate candidates for environmental scanning, expressing concern over their patience with publics in a two-way (or even one-way but opposite to the reportorial experience) communication. For instance, the former head of communications for a major metropolitan daily wrote of how former journalists need “to listen to constituents (ad infinitum), whether they are right or wrong, without losing ‘your cool’ (patience).”

Finally, the unidentified manager addressed not so much how or how well former journalists can scan an environment but what they can do with any resulting data.

> As I work in digital communications, I use web metrics to analyze my audience. Therefore, I want my employees to believe in the importance of metrics, to know how to use a

> spreadsheet and to be interested enough in the data to dig into surprising findings for answers. I have had to teach a couple of former journalists how to use Excel.

And regardless of the qualities of former journalists or others for environmental analysis, one manager noted that it still requires other resources. "I believe research is crucial but it is still very difficult yo [sic] convince those who hold the purse strings that it is worth investing in."

What hinders former journalists in public relations?

The third and final research question, RQ3, **Do journalistic worldviews or other vestiges handicap former journalists in their new profession at any level, especially from serving in strategic roles?**, touches on not just skills and abilities but also job suitability, including attitude and approach. And managers were not shy in listing such hindrances. While several simply listed general qualities that (some) former journalists lack – “impatience, easily bored, unable to focus,” as the community development manager, a recent international and national newspaper correspondent, put it -- others saw more specific needs. The more universal criticisms were usually rooted in journalistic worldviews, for instance a comment by the Assistant Vice President for strategic communications that former journalists “have to unlearn how to be the critic and learn how to be the proponent of corporate strategies. They have to learn to ‘stand on the inside’ and not just throw rocks from the outside.” In fact, “have to learn” was one of the most common verb forms among responses -- though “know how” placed first, lifted by its use six times in a list of former journalists’ pitching strengths by one of the information-technology sector managers[6] -- with “unlearn how to” also appearing frequently.

Many of these suggested retrainings were minor – “Some have to learn to write with a positive spin!” -- but many others were more universal – “Hindrance can be too much expertise in the a [sic] particular field!” -- and the use of exclamation remarks in these two examples highlighted the strong feelings the question evoked. The French defense-sector manager wrote that “too much confidence, arrogance, casualness are obstacles,” while one of the university communications chiefs said former journalists need “to be able to understand the key differences between audiences; to be willing to compromise.”

In some cases, the issue may be that different former journalists bring certain qualifications as benefits and others as disadvantages. The question to respondents asked for both hindrances and positive attitudes and abilities, and a few answered with a list of qualities that could fit both profiles, depending on their presence or absence. For instance, the recent head of a college’s public relations operations responded, without specifying hindrance or advantage: "Creative thinking; assessment skills; personality; professional interest in topics and talents."

Discussion of flexibility and accommodation came up frequently. The manager at the automaker said former journalists were prone to navel-gazing, while the communications advisor for half of a top national market for a leading restaurant chain when interviewed (previously Global Communications Manager for a top entertainment

[6] See Page 82 for quotation of part of this response

software firm as well as a top communications manager for a variety of sporting equipment firms as well as a Sports Information Director for a university) listed “ego, defensiveness, inflexible” natures as hindrances. One of the education-services public relations managers wrote that former journalists need "[t]o be able to support a plan which your boss or organization had initiated even though you do not necessarily agree with it....the skill to be able to communicate disagreement with your boss on a particular issue without burning bridges (the fortitude to tell him/her that you think they are wrong)."

Concern about a fundamental lack of such patience also extends to external publics. The government and education-services manager worried that former journalists need "[a]n ability to separate your own biases from assessing how others will view an event."

In describing his/her view of hindrances, the business-services sector manager also wrote of a greater disconnect on former journalists’ part, where such a practitioner crafts a perfect piece with "wonderful language, great prose, etc."

> But it’s off strategy!!! The key, back to my earlier point, is to build that skill set of being a “strategic pragmatist” -- great at your craft, but great at understanding and embracing a company’s strategies to further the value individuals and teams deliver!

The automaker’s manager concluded, "I’ve found that the skill sets of journalists and PR people have precious little in common. Journalists in order to become good PR people need to learn how to become team players rather than independent, competitive hard-drivers."

Finally, the communications manager for the advertising company saw the liabilities of former journalists as at least difficult to overcome, but also questioned the overall validity of such a description of migrants:

> a journalist who become a PR consultant generally struggle at the begining. The position is radically different [...] they suppose they are able to cross the line, but sometimes they don't understand the deep change and consequences... No, as a PR, they have to sell something, a story, to someone else; they are not just the buyer! And [...] today everyone can decide to be a journalist behind his/her laptop or his/her smartphone ... [all verbatim]

Discussion

A lack of information on who practices public relations

Journalists have always formed a large portion of the population of public relations practitioners of all levels and all roles. But exactly what that share is, and the relative rates of former journalists at different levels in the industry's hierarchy, is a large unknown, for this study and in any assessment of public relations period. Journalism experience was a principal path to the industry until the growth of significant university curriculum for public relations, which Verčič & Grunig (2000) date to courses Edward Bernays first taught at New York University starting in the early 1920s but which largely took flight later, such as L'Etang's dating (1999, cited in Chung 2007/8), of a broad curriculum at least in the United Kingdom to no earlier than the 1948 formation of the Institute for Public Relations. Better understanding of the various populations of public relations practitioners, and their training and prior experience would expand the context and applicability for these and, for instance, Delker's 2012 findings.

Besides a quantitative investigation of practitioner population as well as further qualitative interviews to flesh out or expand on these findings, the most obvious extension of this research would be to look at the actual transition of journalists to public relations. An anthropological-cultural-environmental field study of specific individuals or data collection via diary or other self- or researcher-completed monitoring of a migration would offer complementary insights into the application of journalistic skills in public relations plus offer the opportunity to see the dynamics between manager and former journalist, albeit in select and very qualitative manners, as a new employee's abilities and hindrances, if any, are evaluated in the field.

Looking further into international issues, the limited number of non-American public relation managers who took part in this research only hinted at the differences in views managers might hold from country to country. One French respondent focused on the adversarial nature of journalism as a means of ferreting information – "They know the mechanisms of power, they know who is in charge or has information; they know how to get information and draw attention to it" -- a point that a US manager made quite differently: "The outside view of the corporation and the industry we operate within is very key. They [journalists now in public relations] know what information they were either never able to get or how access was granted (if it ever was)." Opportunity for research exists to provide insight into cultural differences in public relations managers' views, of former journalists or the use of information in general; this would offer a useful expansion on material now available on the internationalization of the profession, much of it either on historical development of the industry in specific countries or the adoption, or not, of Grunig's theories, as measured by researchers from Singapore to Slovenia.

Not only are the international issues not in any way conclusive, but as this project involved qualitative research, the findings are subject to the overriding concern that conclusions from such inquiry are usually not generalizable beyond the specific group interviewed. Instead, they are considered to have "particularity" (Creswell, 2014, p 204). That limitation hinders the applicability of this research's results to broader hiring and promotion decisions in public relations as well as predictability for future migrants from journalism. These findings, then, can be only suggestive for career choice and best practice for journalists and public relations managers. However, the findings' hints at how managers value former journalists in their fields, in all roles, while also seeing significant challenges in migration, offer future researchers opportunity to examine and expand upon, possibly quantitatively, the findings of this research.

Examining both sides of the employee-manager power dynamic

Further, Brennen (2013) maintains that there is a basic "understanding that all inquiry is fundamentally subjective" (p 16), but this project's reliance on managers' opinions of former journalists' potential in public relations greatly increased that subjectivity.

Managers were selected most of all because their opinions directly affect the former journalists' success, or lack of it, in their new field, but also because their managerial positions require them to assess all their employees' performance, giving them the means to contrast the work and nature of former journalists with that of their non-journalist peers. But the managers are only one side of the equation that determines career outcomes for former journalists in public relations; future research might rigorously assess how former journalists themselves see their strengths, weaknesses and any hindrances in their new field. Delker (2012) examined deeply but narrowly select former journalists' own views of their roles and transferred skills in public relations but that was only a sidelight of her general review of their job satisfaction. Plus her interviewees, as very recent migrants and almost exclusively working for small departments in nonprofits, mostly fit the "technician" role, rather than being strategists.

Employee as well as managerial assessment

Finally, aspects of this research addressed job roles and transitions within and between industries, but not using a specific management or workplace theory. As the questions focused principally on selection and performance skills among subordinates, few responses lent themselves to consideration using theory-based metrics for analysis of transition issues (Nicholson, 1984). For instance, managers were not queried as to possible cognitive dissonance issues in the former journalists' or even the managers' own use of skills and other performance assessments. Another possible route for future research might be to use techniques such as the Porter and Lawler Expectancy Model to look quantitatively and/or qualitatively at job-role similarities between journalism and public relations, particularly in terms of worker satisfaction (as Delker did to a very limited and non-theory-based degree) or skills transfer and attainment, including comparing employees' and managers' impressions of those metrics as well as overall performance. Inquiry into job satisfaction, particularly in the context of former journalists' roles and opportunities for advancement, could further inform the opportunities and impediments former journalists face and what their managers feel, consciously or not, should be considered by job candidate and hirer alike in judging opportunities, roles and fulfillment in public relations.

Delker (2012), as well as examining roles, did query the former journalists (but not their managers) on job satisfaction in their new industry, saying that "it is significant to evaluate current job satisfaction compared with their former positions" (p 27), a finding she fit into her theme of newsroom nostalgia. Fortunately for the 12, none expressed dissatisfaction with public relations, with eight saying they were "very happy" and three "mostly happy." By contrast, only eight recalled similar levels of happiness in their journalism days, not broken down into the two subcategories, with the other four reporting equal happiness and unhappiness. Like Dozier (1992), Delker saw a possible connection between the more purely technician roles the bulk of her interviewees held and possible satisfaction through creative work. Future researchers might assist both employees and the public relations industry by investigating, perhaps quantitatively, any intersection of journalistic skills and abilities with job (dis)satisfaction in public relations, in both more technical and strategic roles.

Advantages and limitations in e-mail interviews

While Delker used in-person qualitative interviews, this study largely depended on asynchronous email, the principal form of text-based Internet research judged in the research literature. A mix of structures in the interviews used a small share of structured questions at the start to provide the personal history and other granular data, also permitting participants to write about themselves first, before shifting to semistructured questions to examine their views of their subordinates. Meho (2006) distinguishes between a single round of structured questions -- likening that form to a mere survey in a manner that suggests he considers it quantitative rather than qualitative in nature -- and multiple exchanges of email over time, usually with at least some unstructured questions generated from earlier answers; his distinction indicates he considers only the latter to qualify as in-depth interviewing. Many of the executives who agreed to participate in this research did so fairly quickly and efficiently, but evidenced little interest in follow-up; a few ruled it out completely, and as one respondent was never identified, that person could not be reached for further comment. As a result, the bulk of data used in this research came from the initial interview, allowing for direct comparison of responses.

In general, asynchronous email interviews yielded less data than comparative in-person interviews would likely have generated, and significantly less non-verbal information despite respondents' use of various contextual cues as capitalization and punctuation. However, email or social media interviewing will only grow in use, this researcher expects, and attempts to expand on this research, for instance in terms of international differences in use or appreciation of former journalists in public relations will very likely require some sort of distance interviewing.

Based on the literature, this researcher concludes that the evolution and acceptance of Internet-based textual interviewing may now be where telephone interviewing was in the academy decades ago (Selwyn & Robson, 1998, citing Babbie, 1992), along a similar but faster timeline to the earlier medium, which was patented in 1876 and reached approximately half of US households around 1940 (telephonymuseum.com, 2012; infoplease.com, 2007, citing US Census Bureau). Further development of Internet-based communications will increase the facility of remote electronic interviews, both text-based and visual-verbal interviews via Internet telephony. But future researchers will have to improve the results of balancing the limitations of such interviews with ever-shorter attention spans and increasing demands on subjects' time, potentially limiting traditional in-person, face-to-face data collection.

One specific aspect of text-based interviewing this researcher chose not to pursue was corrections or clarifications to respondents' texts. While the results of these interviews bore out many of the literature's claimed positives for text-based interviews, particularly in allowing for respondents to answer when they wish and in their own settings, there was the risk of unintentional misstatements by interviewees, caused by poor typing or composition, much like responses in oral interviews can contain verbal slips. No reply seemed so confused as to be unusable, though many featured errors in spelling or syntax unlikely for such high-ranking executives were they not semi-casually answering by email or in survey form. Errors were more frequent in replies via SurveyMonkey, which unlike Word and many email programs does not feature a spelling and grammar checker.

James & Busher [2006] warn that poor questions in textual interviews can lead to misunderstanding or confusion on the part of subjects, with limited means to correct (or even, this researcher adds, notice) the misimpression quickly. Not a single respondent, even in the pretesting, provided his or her title or company's sector, as requested for the first question, and many answered only either part of two-part questions, which was resolved in some cases through follow-up emails or telephone conversations. The text interviews' limited number of questions, a function of attempted brevity for the interviewees' benefit and to adapt to SurveyMonkey's limitations, led to those two-part questions, which in retrospect were not helpful;

researchers focused on technique in asynchronous email interviews might delve deeper into the best forms for questions, and how to most effectively pose the most economical number of questions.

Conclusions

The applications of assessing former journalists in public relations

Since its earliest days, public relations has relied on former journalists for a significant number of its practitioners, from P.T. Barnum (Raucher, 1968) to Ivy Lee (Harrison & Moloney, 2003) through the New Deal White House press operations (Lee, 2009) to recent refugees as newspapers downsize their newsrooms (eg Romenesko, 2006; McIntyre, 2009; Beaujon, 2012). Professional assessments, both supportive (eg Bunker, 2011; Cain, 2011; Caruso, 2011) and skeptical (eg Fiske, 2011; Kennedy, 2011; Pearce, 2010), abound concerning the abilities and contributions former journalists bring to the industry, very often from former colleagues who have remained in newsrooms. At the same time, quantitative and qualitative studies worldwide have tracked the often rancorous relationships between journalists and public relations (eg DeLorme & Fedler, 2003; DeLorme, 2008; Tilley & Hollings, 2008); these studies at times include casual assessment of the media relations effectiveness of former journalists.

With the severe shrinkage in the number and staffs of newspapers, and the accompanying surge in disemployment among trained journalists, newsroom refugees find themselves seeking new work that values their reportorial or editorial abilities, and public relations is often posited as a viable career path (Hodierne, 2009). Similarly, the industry has long relied on journalism to train at least its technicians (Dozier, 1992). Such a “seat of the pants” approach, which Grunigian theory deems anathema in other aspects of public relations (Dozier, 1992; Grunig, 1992), requires confirmation or refutation, for the benefit of both the industry and its potential new employees.

In the extensive review of public relations literature, no study has ever rigorously investigated the appropriateness or application of journalists’ skills and abilities, as well as potential or real handicaps they may retain, during and after their migration. This is a blindspot not just for the industry but also for the theory underpinning public relations, and as a result large parts of mass communications in general.

The stakes for the industry and its personnel, present and potential, are hardly trivial. Given that public relations is a $12.5 billion industry (Sudhaman, 2014) and that vast amounts of anecdotal evidence, though no careful census, show a journalism background as a common path to public relations, confirmation of former journalists’ suitability in the industry is critical for humanpower deployment and career choice. The subject is relevant to communications both as a source of significant information for journalism and as a means of communication – potentially symmetrically – in and of itself.

Former journalists’ value under Grunig’s theory

This project’s inductive research of the skills, abilities and liabilities of former journalists in public relations offers to answer questions of employees’ value in terms of appropriateness of activity while also investigating the value and validity of the theory used historically and recently to evaluate the potential and performance of practitioners and public relations in general, possibly improving organizations’ utility of staff and strategy. Grunig's theory depends on assumptions that at times come under implicit or explicit questioning by both professionals (eg DiStasio &al, 2009; Berg, 2009; *Inside PR*, 2010) and scholars (eg Elliott & Koper, 2002; Hardin & Pompper, 2004) who prize journalistic skills in public relations, and even some who do not. This project does not, in and of itself, address or resolve whether Grunig's general theory is appropriate to corporate and other mass communications. But defining the validity of the manager/technician split as developed through Grunig's general theory; identifying which skills, if any, allow for development and transition between the two roles; and assessing handicaps to such a transition or to effective two-way communications and symmetry: These determinations are all critical to confirming the viability and value of former journalists in the public relations – or the validity of principal conclusions from, in particular, Grunig's theory.

So this project has sought to answer two sub-issues related to the theory: 1) what value do former journalists bring to public relations in the form of their skills, abilities and worldviews and 2) can former journalists use those qualities effectively in strategic as well as technical roles in public relations, particularly to further two-way symmetrical communication.

Creswell (2014) sees the qualitative method as a search for the interviewee's meaning: "the researcher keeps a focus on learning the meaning that the participants hold about the problem or issue, not the meaning that the researchers bring to the research ..." (p 186). As such, the focus of this research, with its emphasis on a rational estimation of former journalists' skills and roles in public relations, sought to examine how the managers' responses reflect and fit into Grunig's Excellence Theory.

While the impressions of former journalists in their new industry are important, Delker's (2012) findings plus numerous anecdotal impressions from former journalists (eg Agyemang, 2011; Bunker, 2011; Cain, 2011; Caruso, 2011; Fiske 2011; *Inside PR*, 2010; Kennedy, 2011; Ward, 2007), even recruitment advertisements, provide adequate description of the minimal activities expected of former journalists. The first question this research addressed, then, is, do strategic communications executives see journalistic experience and skills as serving well in those tasks and especially in strategic management as described by Grunig's theory?

For the most part, the answer is quite clearly yes. Few respondents were dismissive of former journalists in the field, current or future. While many saw former journalists as a training challenge, by and large they said, or the qualities they listed as desirable show, that they valued the skills and background associated with journalism -- and nearly all considered journalistic skills to be at least as important as public relations knowledge or credentials, even half of those who said specifically that they preferred candidates with a public relations background. The degree of certainty for responses was broad within that positive range, with none so enthusiastic as the restaurant chain's communications manager who declared firmly, "Journalists have instant respect and just need corporate experience and internal relationships to succeed." But the managers, former journalist and non-journalist alike, overall found much utility for former journalists throughout public relations.

That said, the managers actually used few former journalists in strategic planning for their communications. Who actually engages in significant strategic communications was a big question, as not only do the former journalists not do much of it, neither do the managers themselves, which raises the question of the influence the theory or its terminology has had on these managers, most of whom rank high enough and many of whom have public relations educations such that they should be familiar with Grunig's theory and could implement it within their operations.

Limitations and hindrances to former journalists' success in public relations

Worldviews are a particularly thorny issue in the literature of public relations (Grunig & White, 1992) as it applies to journalism. Numerous studies exist detailing the history and potential sources of antagonism between PR practitioners and current journalists, with several pointing to fundamental differences in worldviews as a leading factor (DeLorme & Fedler, 2003; Fedler & DeLorme, 2002; Neijens & Smit, 2006; Melladoa & Hanuschb, 2011; Tilley & Hollings, 2008): The hostility between the two fields informed many of the anecdotes of rancor when a journalist would leave a newsroom to go to the "dark side." Because such worldviews as objectivity (Lippmann, 1922; Cohen, 1992) and the public's right to know (Deuze, 2005; Coleman, 2000) can run counter (McBride, 1989) to the two main models of public relations in Grunig's theory – advocacy and two-way symmetrical – this project's interviews focused on any concerns managers have about retention of journalistic codes; if any, whether or not those concerns have ever proved valid; and if so, how.

The managers do worry about the transfer of certain worldviews, if not formal codes, from journalism as well as traits associated with newsrooms that do not fit into the corporate environment. From swearing to short-term focus to inflexibility, they see former journalists as having a harder time adapting smoothly and peacefully into their new profession even as their skills make them effective in performing many of the tasks it assigns. In particular, those skills the managers most appreciate do fit best in the technician role, and managers specifically talked about how former journalists exercised those skills successfully in technician-like functions. Where their concerns about worldviews rose were managers' views about fundamental approaches to power and attitudes and self-restraint within the corporate world, elements more in line with executive if not strategic roles. As the unidentified manager put it, "They have to unlearn reflexive cynicism and sarcasm, and that sometimes 'no comment' is the best comment." More generally, the healthcare executive wrote of former journalists' need to "Un-Learn stance th[at] business is generally bad, learn strategic planning and executive project management."

The issue of impolitic, non-corporate tendencies of former journalists within corporate environments suggests conflict within communications departments, and the manner in which many respondents drew stark distinctions between former journalists and non-journalists -- a comparison explicitly invited by the interview questions -- shows that managers see the two camps as clearly distinguishable, for better and for worse.

The concerns about former journalists' political savvy in their new field raise questions about orientation and other transition training. The respondents' general support for the suitability and utility of former journalists suggests that they saw such new employees as able to slot into public relations smoothly. But can they, and what role do managers and organizations play in the transition? Anecdotal evidence from the Literature Review and even this researcher's own experience and observations suggest that much hinges on the managers' own adeptness at handling the transition. In this respect, public relations is not necessarily different from newsrooms: Ability to manage messages does not necessarily translate into managerial or even strategic competency any more than being an exceptional reporter or editor recommends a journalist as a newsroom manager (Roush, 2014).

Beyond managers' own leadership and inculcation skills, departments' and enterprises' initiation practices are also important. Analysis of public relations departments' in-house professional training would add context to the managers' concerns about former journalists' retained worldviews and other newsroom vestigial traits, addressing how teachable former journalists are and whether or not the organization can successfully impart the traits and worldviews that the managers deem necessary for success in public relations.

Those critical attributes also include advocacy, a significantly different approach not just to the social and informational worldviews common to journalism but also to the entire reason behind dissemination of information. From Ivy's principles through Bernay's practices to Grunig's and alternate modern theories, public relation involves advocacy of the organization's priorities, even if accommodation and modification are part of the exchange. Journalism in its classic form is one-way communication, with the reporter as objective observer providing information to an audience.

The shift to greater advocacy in some reporting, controversial as it is in newsrooms, may also affect the skills and especially worldviews of journalists who embrace it should they later migrate to public relations. In some ways such journalism is even further removed from Grunig's two-way theory, perhaps resembling more Ivy's or Bernay's approach to information dispersal, and whether it better or worse prepares a journalist for mastery of public relations according to any modern theory, Grunig's or contingency or other, is something that only time and future research can determine.

Former journalists as reporters assessing organizations' publics

One corollary application of Grunig's theory, issues management, also showed little effect on allocation of time or use of managers' or subordinates' skills. Many respondents credited environmental scanning as important, but even so they infrequently engaged in it and did not see it as a critical responsibility for their practitioners, former journalists and non-journalists alike. This limited resource allocation fits neither the strategist view of two-way symmetrical communications nor the issues management approaches of Lauzen, De Santo or even Boudreaux.

Further, former journalists' reportorial skills were mentioned as newshound abilities, finding the most effective way to prepare, promote and place news, but few respondents spoke of using former journalists (or non-journalists) to find news outside of material presented by the enterprise, never mind scanning the environment scientifically or using reportorial training, a task they seemed to reserve for at least themselves, if not only senior-most strategic communicators or even higher-ranking (C-suite) executives. But with over half of the respondents being former journalists themselves, that exclusion suggested that experience in journalism is not a consideration when managers assign scanning (and perhaps rank is).

One concern is whether reportorial training, focused as it is on ferreting information in a very one-way manner, is in fact too pre-modern in nature, so as to make it at least a non-positive for issues management as Grunig's theory and its corollaries apply the technique to two-way symmetrical public relations. As the aerospace-defense Strategic Communications Director who had served in the governmental, financial and medical sectors, wrote, former journalists "need to learn how to give interviews, not conduct interviews, write messages rather than record them, and retrain their mind from high objective to highly subjective."

One respondent, the infrastructure manufacturing Communications Director, expanded on Grunig & Grunig's (2010) discussion of the influence of the Internet on such scanning, and all two-way symmetrical communication, by questioning the entire use of media relations.

> The role of editors used to be to edit the sea of content, delivering only what the publication's audience was interested in. But today, we don't need editors to do that. We can do it ourselves. I actually don't care whether traditional media picks up my stories -- The people I want to talk to hare (sic) self-editing search filters.

Such a media world, this respondent continued, is

> very, very different ..., and I don't think any of us communicate in it very well. If you are studying the relative contributions that former journalists can make to business communications, you need to be very explicit about the assumptions you are making about how that world works.

Be that as it may, whether journalists can contribute and should be hired for public relations is a largely moot question: Many of them are already there, and if those already there had proved useless, more would not have been hired, though management research has detected the tendency among managers to hire candidates similar to themselves (Grant, 2013; Sears & Rowe, 2012).

The managers in this research made clear that they value the talents and skills of former journalists. What they are less sure about is whether those former journalists can be used for corporate strategic operations and planning -- but then they seem no more certain that non-journalist peers have the abilities as well as the qualifications to take on those duties under Grunig's theory.

This research adds to an industry history showing that public relations needs former journalists to some degree in all its various evolutionary forms under Grunig's theory, from the most primitive hucksterism of the publicity model through the ideal of mutual understanding in the two-way symmetrical model. The issue of who should be the strategic communications manager leading an enterprise's interaction with the public, in the view of the managers in this study, is less a question between former journalist or not but rather whether any employee has the form and the opportunity within the enterprise to realize such an ideal state.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Interview questions

1. Did you work or train as a journalist earlier in your career?

2. What percentage of your week is spent on:

   a. strategic management?
   b. personnel management?
   c. environmental analysis or outreach?
   d. direct external outreach (eg, media relations)?

3a. How many PR practitioners have you managed?

3b. How many, or what share, of them were or are former journalists?

3c. What share of those former journalists has been involved in developing your organization's public relations strategy; and if any, how much of their time is or was devoted to strategizing and how much to executing strategy?

4. What do you look for in job candidates, especially in terms of PR strategic planning?

5. Besides writing and media contacts, what do former journalists bring to public relations operations and strategy, and your organization's in particular?

6a. If both former journalists and nonjournalists are involved in determining your organization's PR strategy or other actions, what differences are there in how the two types identify, evaluate and solve communications issues?

6b. Do journalists have to learn (or unlearn) skills to be effective public relations strategists?

7a. Which skills, attitudes and abilities do you value for scanning your audiences and stakeholders (environmental analysis or issues management)?

7b. Which do you see as hindrances?

Appendix B: Cover letter 1

Dear Mx. XXXX,

So-and-so recommended you as a voice critical to the research I am doing with the University of Missouri Journalism School on former journalists in public relations. As a top Communications and Information executive overseeing a mix of employees who execute your organization's PR strategy, you are the best resource to evaluate what your reports bring to the field and their effect in developing and executing that strategy.

Former journalists and journalism graduates have populated PR since the days of Ivy Lee and Edward Bernays. Theory about their role abounds, but no one has ever scientifically evaluated how and how well they do in the field compared with practitioners with no journalism experience, and why: You can be among the first to provide the necessary and best input to assess the strengths, potential and impediments of former journalists in the field as part of scholarly, peer-reviewed study.

This research is for a master's degree project supervised by Glen Cameron, co-author of the leading introductory text to public relations, *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*, now in its 11th edition. The results – gleaned from the experience and knowledge of those who depend on former journalists' work, who review their performance, and who decide their careers – aim to help companies and managers better estimate the value of former journalists versus other practitioners, especially for posts that involve developing communications strategy.

In exchange for less than an hour of your time, I promise to safeguard your anonymity, with data and quotes attributed only by title, company sector and whether or not you have a journalism background. You will receive the results of the study upon its approval by the University of Missouri, so you can compare your counterparts' views with your own. All I ask is that within the next two weeks you answer the below questions, which are also attached as a Word document or can be accessed at http://bit.ly.xJournosInPR. Afterwards, I would send you a few follow-up questions based on your responses that should take even less time to answer.

Further information about this project, its goals or me available upon request.

Thank you for your time and irreplaceable input for this study to fill a hole in PR management.

Robert Youngblood
University of Missouri
youngbloodr@gmail.com

Appendix C: Cover letter 2

Dear Sir or Madam,

Yours is a voice critical to the research I am doing with the University of Missouri Journalism School on former journalists in public relations. As a top Communications and Information executive overseeing a mix of employees who execute your organization's PR strategy, I seek your input as the best resource to evaluate what your reports, former journalists and non-journalists, bring to the field and their effect in developing and executing that strategy.

Former journalists and journalism graduates have populated PR since the days of Ivy Lee and Edward Bernays. Theory about their role abounds, but, surprisingly, no one has ever scientifically evaluated how and how well they do in the field compared with practitioners with no journalism experience, and why: By taking part in this research, you can be among the first to provide the necessary and best input to assess the strengths, potential and impediments of former journalists in the field as part of scholarly, peer-reviewed study.

This research is for a master's degree project supervised by Glen Cameron, co-author of the leading introductory text to public relations, *Public Relations: Strategies and Tactics*, now in its 11th edition. My own experience in both journalism and in public relations technical work and strategy led to my pursuing this project to find out how really useful former journalists are after they make the migration so common in the fields. I intend for the results – gleaned from the experience and knowledge of those who depend on former journalists' work, who review their performance, and who decide their careers – aim to help companies and managers better estimate the value of former journalists versus other practitioners, especially for posts that involve developing communications strategy.

In exchange for less than an hour of your time, I promise to safeguard your anonymity, with data and quotes attributed only by title, company sector and whether or not you have a journalism background. You will receive the results of the study upon its approval by the University of Missouri, so you can compare your counterparts' views with your own. All I ask is that within the next two weeks you answer the below questions, which are also attached as a Word document or can be accessed at http://bit.ly.xJournosInPR. Afterwards, I would send you a few follow-up questions based on your responses that should take even less time to answer.

Thank you for your time and irreplaceable input for this study to fill a hole in PR management.

Robert Youngblood

(rest as above)

Appendix D: InMail (Linked) letter

InMail **|** [researcher's work organization was visible to addressee; now deleted]

Subject: please participate in research on journalists in PR

August 30, 2014 2:50 PM

Hello Mx. XXXX,
Please excuse this unsolicited request, but given your multinational experience and leadership in communications strategy, I would very much like to include your insights in University of Missouri qualitative research on strengths and/or limitations journalists bring to public relations. The online survey takes only minutes, and I will be most happy to share the findings with you, so you can compare your views to those of other PR leaders. Please reply or "Link" for details or the URL of the survey.
Thank you,
Robert Youngblood

Appendix E: SurveyMonkey questionnaire

Title: Journalists in public relations

Hello,

Thank you for your input for this master's project on journalists in public relations. Unless you expressly request otherwise, your identity will be kept confidential and any quotes or other information related to your responses will be identified at most by title, company sector and/or whether or not you have a journalism background.
I would very much like to be able to send you a few brief followup questions based on your replies. If you are willing to receive those questions, upon completion of the survey please email me at youngbloodr@gmail.com.
Thank you again,
Robert Youngblood

1. Did you work or train as a journalist earlier in your career? In the Other section, please give your title and which sector (eg consumer goods, nonprofit, energy, etc.) you work in.

- [ ] I worked as a journalist
- [ ] I received a journalism degree but never worked as a journalist
- [ ] I neither studied nor practiced journalism

Other (please specify) ________

2. What percentage of your week is spent on:

	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
strategic management										
personnel management										
environmental analysis or outreach										
direct external outreach (eg, media relations)										

Other (please specify) ________

3. How many PR practitioners have you managed?

____

4. What share of them were or are former journalists?

- [ ] What share of them were or are former journalists? less than 10%
- [ ] 10-30%

31-60%

61-90%

more than 90%

Other (please specify)

5. What share, if any, of those former journalists has been involved in developing your organization's public relations strategy; and if any, how much of their time is or was devoted to strategizing and how much to executing strategy?

less than 10%

10-30%

31-60%

61-90%

more than 90%

6. What do you look for in job candidates, especially in terms of PR strategic planning?

7. Besides writing and media contacts, what do former journalists bring to public relations operations and strategy, and your organization's in particular?

8. If both former journalists and nonjournalists are involved in determining your organization's PR strategy or other actions, what differences are there in how the two types identify, evaluate and solve communications issues?

9. Do journalists have to learn (or unlearn) skills to be effective public relations strategists?

10. Which skills, attitudes and abilities do you value and employ for studying and canvassing your audiences and stakeholders to improve the effectiveness of your messages (sometimes known as scanning, environmental analysis or issues management)? Which do you see as hindrances?