

# Improving your media relations tactics

By Sandy Lish

The best PR professionals have an innate and developed sense of responsibility, paving the way for their own successes, and carrying their peers and colleagues upward as well. Whether you're a CEO, manager or just starting your way up the career ladder, you have the ability to drive and support your team members' and colleagues' success.

The best managers and employees recognize, encourage and teach those intangibles that can make a good performer a superstar. For communications professionals in particular, where much of our jobs hinge on personal interactions, these intangibles are even more important. Regardless of the industries you serve or work in, or your team or corporate structure, you can help create better professionals — and thus better teams — by adopting the following:

• **DWYSYWD:** We hate acronyms,

but make an exception for this one. Do What You Say You Will Do. Sounds trite, but it's key to building and maintaining both credibility and respect.

• **Surround yourself with smart, talented, stimulating people:**

Brainstorming, reviewing ideas, having someone to bounce things off — these work only if the folks you interact with can match or exceed your level of creativity and talent.

• **Keep your brain turned on:**

Some of our best ideas come while driving, waiting in line at the supermarket or just before drifting off to sleep at night. In fact, this entire list was conceived in a traffic jam. Keep your mind open to ideas, wherever, whenever.

• **Be perfect — or at least strive to be:** Double-checking your work, your facts, your statistics helps.

• **Pick up the phone:** E-mail is great, but it shouldn't replace personal contact. If you want to get an answer, build a relationship or convey something of real importance, call.

• **Show your personality:** Don't try to be something you're not, and make the most of what you are. Media, clients and colleagues will all respect you and respond better to a real person with a real personality.

• **Be ethical/fair/honest:** We all remember those who aren't. Enough said.

• **Know how to do your job better than anyone else:** The tenet "everyone is replaceable" is not just ominous, it can be true. To stay, grow and succeed, be the best.

• **Speak up:** A great thought unexpressed might as well not have occurred.

• **Laugh:** Sometimes it's the only response that can shed perspective or get you over the hump.

• **Ask questions:** Real knowledge and understanding are among the most valuable assets in business.

• **Create opportunity:** Make things happen. In business, strategic, ethical opportunism can be your greatest advantage. Don't just follow the map — create the roads.

• **Speaking of roads, take the high road:** Always end a conversation or relationship on a high note; you never know when your paths will cross again. **T**



*Sandy Lish is founder and principal of The Castle Group, a Boston-based PR and events management firm.*

Prepared by

