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INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

Corporate Restructuring PR: How to Prepare in Good Times, How to Manage When Layoffs Loom

The lull of the holidays is over, and while the new year brings a sense of endless possibility, the reality is far less hopeful for some, particularly those for whom the start of the year means being restructured out of a job.

Consider the 11,000 workers at **Yahoo**, where press reports have CEO Marissa Mayer contemplating large layoffs. Or staff at oil and energy firms, where the falling price of crude already has resulted in more than 250,000 layoffs.

Does any sector have it as bad as workers in China's state-run heavy industries? With that sector of the world's second-largest economy suffering from bloated debt and overcapacity, there could be some 1.7 million layoffs this year in iron and coal alone, says **Société Générale CIB**.

For PR pros whose portfolios center on internal communications, this time of year can be their busy season. So we asked about best practices for handling restructuring, both

Continued on page 4

CSR

BY MARGERY KRAUS, FOUNDER, EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN, APCO WORLDWIDE

How to Prepare Your Brand for Inescapable Global Transformations

In 2015, the world paid closer attention to significant social changes that transformed the global business landscape. The refugee crisis, terrorist attacks, social justice issues and the recent Paris Climate Conference (COP21) necessitate a renewed dialogue on how organizations can better equip themselves in an era of global uncertainty. 2016 will undoubtedly bring further volatility to the global marketplace and, indeed, to all citizens of the world.

We witnessed the world debate as some nations made the decision to limit their acceptance of Syrian refugees. Republican presidential hopeful Donald Trump called for the U.S. to close its border to immigrants. The Nov. 13, 2015, attack in Paris

renewed fears of terrorism in the west, and the ISIS-inspired shootings in San Bernardino, Calif., aggravated those fears. The topic of climate change has become increasingly substantiated in the wake of COP21, thus encouraging leaders to address their response to these key issues.

While heads of state discuss these events at a political level, businesses are in a unique position to tackle those uncertainties more directly.

In 2015, big brands overwhelmingly supported a myriad of issues and causes. Advertising focused on social justice causes

Continued on page 3



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DATA DIVE

47% of Millennials Obsessed With Their Work Reputation vs. 37% of Gen Xers

Plenty of people argue that millennials are not all that different from older members of the population, although perhaps they're a bit more tech savvy. But what about millennials' attitudes about work and their reputation in the workplace? "They lack a strong work ethic" is the common refrain, and "they don't seem to care."

In fact they care about their reputation at work a great deal, even more than other groups, according to a study, *Millennials@Work: Perspectives on Reputation*, by the **Institute for Public Relations (IPR)** and **Weber Shandwick**.

Nearly half of millennials (47%) report that they think about their reputations at work all or most of the time. That's compared to 37% of Gen Xers and 26% of baby boomers. Millennials also place even greater value on their in-person interactions at work and after hours than older colleagues.

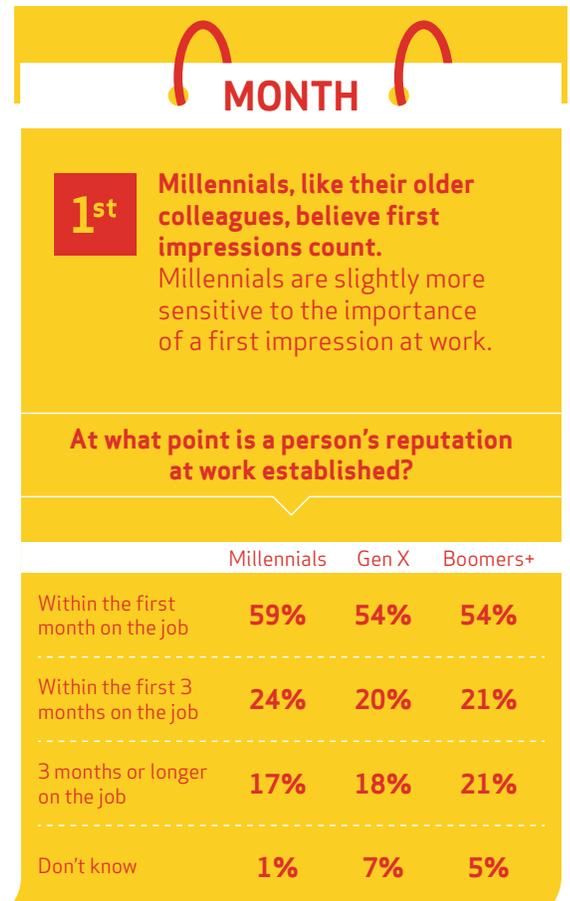
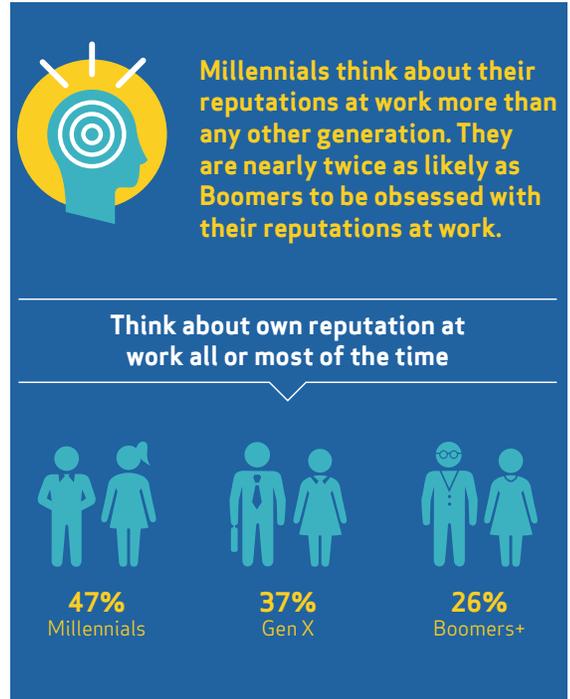
The online survey of 600 employed U.S. adults found one in five millennials believe work and social media reputations are equally important—more than any other generation.

While job performance and punctuality top the list of reputation builders at work for all the generations surveyed, networking and socializing during off-hours are more important to millennials than any other generation. 34% of millennials see meeting with colleagues outside the office as a positive driver of their work reputation, compared to 14% of Gen Xers and 15% of boomers.

Millennials are less aware than their older cohorts how hearsay and gossip can damage their reputations. And they are less likely to see the danger in saying negative things about co-workers than Gen Xers and boomers (64% vs. 74% vs. 79%, respectively) and engaging in gossip about colleagues (64% vs. 72% vs. 74%, respectively). The survey classified millennials as those 18 to 34 years of age; Gen Xers as 33–50; and boomers as those 51 and older.

With millennials the largest share of the American workforce at 53.5 million people, according to a **Pew Research Center** analysis of **U.S. Census Bureau** data, the lessons for PR pros are obvious. ■

[**Editor's Note:** Sarab Kochhar, Ph.D., director of research, Institute for Public Relations, contributed this article. sarab@instituteforpr.org]



The Business Case for Linking Profit & Purpose

ranging from LGBT rights and acceptance to female empowerment. Big brands featured same-sex couples in their advertisements, gaining viral attention among millennials and our next generation of leaders. Similarly, Procter & Gamble's #LikeAGirl campaign gained popularity for redefining gender norms.

Following this trend, communication firms and in-house PR teams can expect corporate and social responsibility to be top of mind for brands. Stakeholders and audiences have more influence over a brand's reputation than ever. The ability to get information and share opinions in a very public and immediate way require that companies not only say what they mean, but that they mean what they say.

Consumers are paying attention—and they care. They care about where their money goes beyond an immediate transaction. They want and expect corporations to advocate for their interests in the communities in which they live. The companies that get this right understand the concept of purpose beyond profit. The smartest ones approach corporate responsibility as a business imperative, not an exercise in brand building.

The foundation of these successful strategies is rooted in authenticity, not in people pleasing. Sometimes this is difficult, especially as issues become increasingly sensitive and a bit controversial. But there are proactive things organizations can do to better prepare themselves to cut through the noise and navigate the uncertainty of what lies ahead.

► **Take a Clear and Direct Stance:** Neglecting to take a clear stance on a popular issue, or treading the middle line, may work for your organization temporarily. However, our research and experience demonstrate that the most effective way to build a respected brand is to establish a culture of purpose beyond profit. Therefore being clear about your values and your purpose is the best and most authentic way to establish loyalty to your company and your products. In 2015, several companies came forward to demonstrate their support for a variety of marginalized groups. After the passing of Religious Freedom Restoration Act in Indiana, **Salesforce** announced that it would allow LGBT employees to relocate from the state, should they feel uncomfortable, and the **UPS Foundation** used its Relief Link program to improve efficiency in the distribution of goods to refugees.

► **Find Those Causes That Are Important to Your Stakeholders and for Which You Have Genuine Passion:** Increasingly consumers want to know about the companies behind the products they buy. What are their practices? What do the companies stand for? How do they deploy their resources? Identifying those issues and causes that align with your business interests is smart business.

► **Be 'Glocal':** As global companies in a global world, it is important to be part of the debates that encircle us. Companies often are in a unique position to be a solutions provider; to find those practical ways to address chronic problems or partner with government to come up with solutions. Companies also understand the importance of customizing global solutions to local markets. Recent examples of this can be seen with the issue of employment and refugees. There can be no more pressing issue at the moment in Europe than the flood of refugees and the need to help these refugees become engaged in the places where they have resettled. In December 2015, German automotive manufacturing company **Continental** donated €100,000 (roughly \$109,000) to **Welthungerhilfe** and began working with the **German Federal Employment Agency** to create a program that will enable refugees to enter the labor force. What other innovative solutions are out there where business can make a difference and solve problems?

This year will bring many challenges to overcome. Yet out of every challenge will arise opportunities to engage and contribute to a greater good. We must understand the context for what is happening around us and the differences from culture to culture. Our world will survive only if we have a shared purpose with society. This is not merely a matter of public good, it also is an issue of business survival for the future. If communities and their citizens fail to prosper, there will be an absence of robust markets with consumers and businesses to purchase goods and a lack of a committed labor force to create the goods, reminding us every day of the business case for linking profit and purpose: That there will be no successful company in a failed world. ■

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When Restructuring, Focus on the Survivors

for employees who are about to become jobless and for those who remain. Are there potential pitfalls to avoid? Should PR be involved in such dicey communication or let HR handle the burden alone? We asked experienced communicators on the brand and agency sides for insight.



Brian Ames
Corporate VP, Communications, Boeing

Employees Front and Center: An internal communications specialist, Brian Ames subscribes to an employee-centric philosophy when communicating with employees in good times and bad. “Respecting the workforce” should be paramount in all communications, including announcing restructuring. Best practices include telling employees first, or when regulations prohibit that, at least informing staff at the same time investors are told. This assumes you “have time” to polish your communications. “Often there’s very little time to set all that up.” That’s where the amount of credibility management already has with staff is important. Should management “have the foresight to have established employee-centric communications” years before, restructuring should go smoother, Ames says. “A restructuring is a hard time [for management] to begin building a relationship with employees.”

Those Left: “What employees [who still have jobs after a layoff] want to know is how will this change their lives, my workload, my team and the company, in that order,” Ames says. Management that has “the smart humility” to engage employees in plans for “where the company is going...is the best scenario.” When employees feel disengaged is when “they check out” or become marginalized.

What to Avoid: Using jargon and business-speak in restructuring communications. “This really falls flat,” he says. Yet he admits “getting brevity, candor and simplicity” to be part of communications is far from easy. “You need someone who’s championing these things,” he says. “There can be a lot of inertia in big companies,” he says, and some very bad writing. Remember the debacle that was **Microsoft’s** July 2014 restructuring letter? You know, the one from then-EVP Stephen Elop that began “Hello, there” and then heaped on 10 long paragraphs of corporate gobbledygook before announcing 12,500 layoffs in the 11th paragraph.

Collaboration: For Ames, restructuring communication must be a multi-functional effort between nearly all parts of a company, although “the biggest partnership should be between HR and internal communications.”



Christopher Hannegan
EVP, U.S. Practice Chair
Edelman Employee Engagement

PR Leads: Hannegan says communications should lead restructuring announcements, “but with active participation from HR, impacted business unit leaders, site or plant leadership and the executive team.”

Best Practices:

- ▶ **Go High-Touch With Remaining Employees and Critical Talent:** “Be sure to have one-on-one conversations, preferably in person, with these people immediately following the organizational announcement, reinforcing their importance to the company’s future.”
- ▶ **Focus on the Survivors:** Hannegan agrees with Ames that it’s important to keep remaining employees engaged in the process of shaping the future of the organization.
- ▶ **Clearly Articulate the Support the Company Is Affording Departed Employees:** “Not only is severance important to those receiving it,” he says, “remaining employees will watch how the company treats their former colleagues to predict how it will treat them in the future.”
- ▶ **A Timeline Is Critical:** While there likely will be unknowns during the restructuring announcement, provide a clear timeline so employees know when they will receive more information, such as “when the company will make staffing decisions, how long it will take to transition responsibilities and at what point the process will be complete,” he says. “Employees need to know when they can stop bracing for more cuts, at least in the short term.”
- ▶ **Leaders Should Be Seen:** There are few things worse than a leader “laying low” during announcement day and the transition. This is critical to credibility, he says.
- ▶ **Outside-In:** It’s important to communicate layoffs as unfortunate but necessary, explaining the reasons for cuts. “Conversely, it is equally important to address what factors did not contribute to reductions.”
- ▶ **Strategize:** “News and stories employees tell about” restructuring can “live for years...online and in employees’ minds.” It’s critical, therefore, to “make sure things go smoothly...decide upfront what collective actions will guide...internal and external communications.”
- ▶ **Other Do’s:** Treat people with respect by letting them know they’ve lost their jobs in person; share frequent updates; ensure managers always receive advance notification; limit knowledge of downsizing plans to need-to-know list; segment the workforce down to the individual, into those who are leaving, those who are staying for a defined period of time and those who are staying; and provide external-facing employees with appropriate information.

Don’t: Never let media know of restructuring before employees. Sounds obvious? **Intuit**, a financial software firm, in 2008 issued a press release about layoffs before informing employees. Also: Never let employees know they are losing their jobs by phone or email [**Radio Shack** did in 2006]; likewise, avoid sending restructuring notices during holidays or when large segments of the workforce are out of the office. ■

[**Subscriber Bonus:** Additional material at prnewsonline.com]

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How to Use White Papers as Marketing and Promotional Tools



[Editor's Note: This article is the first of a two-part series.]

Research-based white papers can be used as promotional tools—either directly, or in support of other promotions. To be effective, though, certain aspects of white papers are most likely to be important such as:

1. Supportive, already-published, footnoted research. (Unlike blogs, white papers should be devoid of unsubstantiated statements, opinions or conclusions. Blogs are about what you think—white papers are about what independent experts think.)
2. An objective outline structure that weighs both sides of the issue.
3. An objective and balanced writing style, more formal and objective than found in most blogs.
4. A named author with independent credentials.

Realistically, promotionally oriented white papers have axes to grind. However, for them to be successful, they must seem unbiased. The conclusions must flow directly and completely from the cited research, rather than the writer's opinions. This is a major difference between white papers and blogs and why a well-written white paper has more credibility than many blogs. White papers long have been a staple of Silicon Valley start-ups. Targets frequently include potential clients and investors, as well as the trade media.

The Process: These step-by-step instructions may sound academic, but that is because white papers are based on research, which often is academic in nature. Before you begin, develop a detailed outline of points you intend to cover. In your research seek academic or scientific sources if applicable, rather than mainstream media sources.

Thesis Statement: Spell out what you intend to demonstrate in the white paper.

Lay the Foundation: Present a background that examines both sides of an issue or provides a step-by-step history of how what exists today has developed over time.

Identify a Core Problem: This is the issue that the cited research will compare and contrast. It begins the deep exploration of the marketplace problem the white paper will attempt to solve, or point in the direction of a new solution.

Identify the Alternative Solution:

This is the new alternative to the long-standing solution which, as previously identified, doesn't work as effectively as the market would like.

Supporting Evidence: Having made the case that a new paradigm has evolved, the white paper now digs in, citing published research to validate this new paradigm.

Implementing the Alternative Solution: Here the research being cited is based on published studies of the relative efficacy of the new paradigm solution in the field. Having already cited research regarding the efficacy of the existing technology solution to the problem under consideration, compare-and-contrast can begin by citing the contrasting findings.

Draw Conclusions: Having presented both sides accurately and dispassionately, the white paper now starts to draw conclusions. Again, these should focus on published facts, rather than the author's opinion.

Supporting the Conclusion: Having drawn the conclusion, add further support, from yet other published studies.

Summary: A brief (1–2 paragraphs) re-statement of the thesis statement found in the headline.

Cited Sources: These are standard end-notes, linked via superscript numbers to pages within the white paper. Include the title, the author, where it was first published and a hotlink (if it is digital) to the original published source.

Author's Credentials: A brief mini-bio that focuses on the named author's credentials. Cite the writer's credentials as an author of books and articles and/or academic standing as a professor. While not absolutely essential, it builds credibility to have a named author with credentials. However, if this is not possible, rather than name an author who has no relevant credentials, do not include an author at all.

If you follow these steps, you will be able to create white papers that will be widely accepted by readers looking for facts underlying the issue at hand. ■

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PR News is excited to announce this year's list of Top Women in PR, saluting the creativity and accomplishments of our female colleagues at leading agencies, nonprofits, corporations, and more. Honorees will be celebrated at an awards luncheon on 1/26 at the Grand Hyatt New York.

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10 Takeaways for Startup PR Agencies and New In-House Teams



Starting a business is a challenging undertaking involving big risks; however, by relocating from Israel to New York, I was taking a much bigger risk than most. In 2010, I launched **Puder PR** and it has grown steadily since. As such, I'd like to offer advice to those considering starting an agency or brand PR teams seeking to better their game.

As a former PR consultant for major Israeli political figures, I had much experience, but, really, I was starting in New York from scratch. My philosophy for PR startups can be boiled down to: Find your niche—and be the best in it.

Let me explain and offer some lessons I've learned over the years:

1. Find Your Niche: The PR industry is oversaturated. The only way to distinguish your agency from the myriad firms offering similar services is to carve out a niche. This is especially true for startups. You have to be a unique provider, but don't limit yourself. My niche found me. When I worked for Israel's Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, I was constantly in contact with Israeli and Jewish organizations worldwide. When I relocated to the U.S., my extensive contacts at these organizations were a natural starting point for my new business. The media relationships I had cultivated over the years were my greatest asset. Ideally, you should have a strong connection to and personal interest in your niche area.

2. Play to Your Strengths: By the time Puder PR opened in New York, I'd been in touch daily with the Israeli media and major reporters covering this beat. Reporters already were coming to me as a source. When I started the firm, I was poised to be a journalistic source in a whole new way, to introduce more "take" into these give-and-take relationships. Media connections are PR's bread and butter; maintaining strong relationships with the press is essential.

3. Identify Your Weaknesses and Compensate: This is humbling but important. While Hebrew is my mother tongue, I speak English almost fluently. But you might recognize I'm not a native English speaker. Evaluate your strengths and weaknesses and take action. I knew right away the first thing we needed was a native English-speaking copywriter.

4. Assemble a Strong Team: Surround yourself with the best team possible, people who can complement and enhance your skills and take your firm to the next level. Having a solid team of PR pros you can trust is crucial, especially during startup. The fewer staffers, the more each impacts the team's growth. The smaller the team, the less freedom you have to take risks on new hires, so pick your team wisely.

5. Know the Landscape: I've worked in the field long enough that my expertise in Jewish affairs is wide, but that's

not enough. I read the next day's Hebrew headlines before I go to sleep and English headlines prior to work. I make sure I know everything about the Jewish world, including listening to back-room whispers reporters might miss. Obviously, you have to know the media, too. Every reporter who might be relevant should be on your radar, regardless of their stature.

6. Location, Location, Location: Worldwide, about 80% of the world's Jews live in the U.S. or Israel; however, as a PR pro in Israel, I was fairly limited in my reach. By moving to NY, the world's PR capital and a major center of Jewish life, I was able to expand my services. I became a much more viable PR pro to a host of previously inaccessible clients. I retained most of my Israeli clients, who were interested in getting more coverage in American media. My client base grew in ways that wouldn't have been possible in Israel.

7. Think Like an Israeli: Easier said than done. Israelis are known for *chutzpah* (shameless audacity) and we don't like to take no for an answer. Be proactive in creating opportunities for media coverage and pursue them vigorously. Don't be afraid to take risks; coverage won't always be positive, but if you want to make an omelet, you have to break some eggs.

8. Communication Is Key to Communications: I believe we are the only American firm offering full access to the Israeli media in English and Hebrew. My staffers also speak French, Italian and Portuguese. I want to add Spanish and Russian. It's about more than language; be well-versed in the issues and very aware of cultural nuances. It doesn't matter how small your firm or team; the more languages you can use to communicate messages, the more outlets and audiences are available to you and the more valuable you become.

9. Good Service Brings New Business: A major advantage a small firm or team has over larger competition is that its leader can be involved personally in all campaigns. Work hard and be results-driven. Trust me, prospective clients—especially those in your niche market—and business execs will be impressed by your success with other projects.

10. Keep Going: So you've built a great speciality firm or team with a strong roster. You keep abreast of everything related to your field. What now? Be the best! Find ways to offer ever more value: add advertising, media buying, social media and web design to your services by expanding staff. Pursue projects slightly outside your comfort zone. Master a new field by applying the lessons you've learned already. ■

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4 Ways to Start Your Year in PR Strong and Finish It Even Stronger



By now, we all are solidly settled into 2016 and fighting through the winter funk. It's easy to spend January snuggled up and waiting out the dark, cold, rain and snow to get going on all of those important projects when the days get longer. Human nature is to slow down when it's cold and dark, which is why, I think, it's exactly during this time that we need to gear up, refocus on our priorities and prepare for an epic 2016. This is not about skills, strength or endurance. It is about your mental and emotional game.

To talk about starting and finishing strong I need to tell you about what I did four months ago. I started working out with a trainer named Angela. She is tough, has the driest sense of humor and will listen to me talk about work as I struggle through lunges, squats and runs that make up our time together. Early on in my workouts with her I had a cycle of starting slowly, working hard during the middle and really flagging at the end. I thought I was doing great.

After a few weeks of this, she smacked me on the butt as I was slow jogging during the last 10 minutes of a workout and declared that I was going to start and finish each workout strong. I asked how that was possible. She told me that I would find a way.

The benefits of starting and finishing strong are often discussed, but what is most overlooked are real examples of how to do it. Here are four ideas to get you motivated:

1. The Plus 1 Mindset: I am obsessed with this idea because when I see it in action, it's magic. The idea is to take whatever you are working on and make it a little better. And I mean slightly better. When you make something a little better—more research into your customers or add some insightful analysis in the email to your boss—you stand out as someone to watch, someone to fund, someone to partner with, someone to work for or someone to hire. When fighting to get going, start applying the plus 1 mindset to everything you do.

2. Focus on You: It is very easy to spend a lot of time looking around at the competition. If you are looking around you take focus away from your performance and disperse your energy. When I started in tech I was always looking at colleagues' promotions and new jobs with envy and it slowed down my performance. Around that time I found a copy of a quote called the baseball players' creed: Stay within yourself, focus on your goals, be better than yesterday and outperform yourself. My results are always better when I focus on my own performance.

3. Get Inspired Inside and Outside of Your Industry: There are hyper-performers in every industry category that can be inspirational when you start to doubt yourself. I work in tech and am inspired every day by different inventions, startups

and people. What really helps me finish strong is to look outside of my industry.

When I am feeling on the losing side and not making progress on a project, I think back to the 2010 Olympics Team Canada vs. Team USA game in the gold medal round of hockey. It was tied up at 2-2. Canada should have given up but it played well into the overtime period and Sidney Crosby scored the overtime goal that won the game. Team Canada players talked afterward about how they committed to each other before they hit the ice in overtime

“It's easy to spend January snuggled up and waiting out the dark, cold, rain and snow to get going on all of those important projects. Human nature is to slow down when it's cold and dark, which is why it's the time to gear up, refocus on our priorities and prepare for an epic 2016.”

that they would play like it was the first period and bring everything they had. Total inspiration for finishing strong.

4. You Are Not Who you Think you are: Another way to put this is that you are not who you used to be. Maybe you were, at some time, lazy, scattered, unfocused. Well, using a cliché seems appropriate here: That was then, this is now. You have changed and will continue to change and operate at levels you thought were out of reach until now. I read a story once about an intermediate skilled skier who got on the wrong chair lift and found himself at the top of the advanced runs. He stopped someone going by and asked if he could help him find a way down. “You ski down, man,” was the answer. “This is your new level.”

If you need help getting straight on who you are now and what you are capable of, go find the last few people who hired you or promoted you and get their help. This isn't a selfish exercise but a core part of helping your self-perception catch up with where you are today.

Going back to where we started with my workouts. Now the first and last 10-15 minutes of my workouts are the hardest parts. I run until it hurts and then I have to run faster. Though I still dread it, I've definitely got momentum. By deciding to start and finish strong I am declaring how I show up and that will make the best start and finish to 2016. ■

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1. Greek Crisis? In a way, it's an argument over whose Grecian formula is superior. **Chobani** says the stevia leaf extract that sweetens its Simply 100 Greek yogurt is natural. A Chobani ad says sucralose, found in **Dannon's** Light & Fit Greek yogurt, "is an artificial sweetener...processed with added chlorine..." Recalling the wars of ancient Greece, the two sides took up arms—er, lawyers. Dannon charged Chobani with "making false, misleading, disparaging, or deceptive statements or claims" and demanded it pull the ad. Chobani returned serve, calling for a trial and for Dannon to pay legal bills. In a news release, Chobani's chief marketing and brand officer **Peter McGuinness** said, "Consumers have the right to know what's in their cup." [Ed Note: That statement sounds better in Greek.] More than a few PR lessons here. By the way, the federal government says both sweeteners are safe, *Food Safety News* reports.

2. No More Studies: As the nation celebrates Martin Luther King Day, one diversity advocate claims the PR industry is "light years away" from where it should be in its C-suites and senior-level positions. **Mike Paul**, the crisis PR expert known as The Reputation Doctor, also blasted PR for continuing to study diversity instead of "doing something substantial about it...nothing needs to be studied...when you have goose eggs [zero diverse members] in upper levels of firms. What do you need to study?" Paul, who said PR firms have "about 10%" of people of color in their ranks "at best," was referring to a study from **PRSA Foundation** (PRN Oct 26, 2015). The survey of PR employers



Mike Paul

and young PR pros shows both were sanguine about the industry's steps toward building a diverse workforce. The largest disagreement was over retention. Nearly 80% of employers felt PR is "very" to "somewhat successful" in retaining a diverse workforce; one-third of the young PR pros felt the industry is "not successful." PRSA Foundation senior counselor to the board on diversity **Rochelle Ford** told us, "PRSA believes strongly that to proactively address the diversity challenges we must be informed through research and build programs that specifically address those challenges. For the last two years our grant-funded diversity programs addressed strengthening the pipeline. Our research specifically addressed diversity best practices for CCOs and agency leadership..." Ford added she's "confident under the leadership of **Torod Neptune** the industry will see greater evidence of the impact of the Foundation's work, while it more closely addresses the retention of diverse talent in PR and the promotion of diverse talent into senior and executive levels." Paul also whacked the **Arthur W. Page Society** for its inaction on diversity. In response, Page president **Roger Bolton** told us, "No one disagrees that we need to make a more concerted effort to increase diversity and inclusion across all ranks within our profession, especially in leadership positions. It's the right thing to do." Bolton added Page has joined other industry groups "to achieve this important goal. Greater diversity in our leadership and within our teams is essential to our ability to build lasting trust with all stakeholders." – In a related story, the **National Black**



Nancy Fitzsimmons, SVP, Hill+Knowlton

Public Relations Society (NBPRS) released what it called a "bold diversity action plan...designed to disrupt and transform the industry." The product of its first summit last fall, the group's four-point plan calls for it to "concentrate on creating access to jobs; supporting small business and thought leadership/advocacy; and leadership development for black professionals and entrepreneurs." Reacting to the plan, Mike Paul [see above item] said, "Of course we all want to mentor the young, but without a true focus on executive recruitment for top senior execs of color, SVP and above, into global PR firms and top CCO and CMO positions in global corporations no true progress will be made...and the revolving door of junior people leaving within 2 to 3 years will continue." In addition, NBPRS named its new president, **Neil Foote**, a PR exec and educator with more than 30 years experience. He replaces **Richelle Payne**.

3. People: **Hill+Knowlton Strategies** named **Nancy Fitzsimmons** SVP in its corporate and crisis practice. – **Catalyst PR** founder **Bret Werner** joined the executive team of **MWWPR** as EVP and chief client officer. – **Porter Novelli** said **Verónica González** joined its Mexico City office to lead its local and regional health and wellness practice. – **Kevin Ivers** joined **DCI Group** as VP for client services. – **Solomon McCown** named **Daniel Cence** SVP and said he will lead its new government relations practice and be a member of the firm's crisis management team. – **Beth Kwon** joined **Brodeur Partners** as VP. – **Barry Ziehl** was named SVP, public affairs and strategic initiatives, **Warner Bros. Entertainment**. ■

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