

## Five Behind, Five Ahead—Take a Look

A journalism conference speaker once suggested that attending editors go home, pull out a publication issue of five years ago and compare it with a current one. If the two look pretty much the same, he said, the publication is in trouble.

In retrospect, it seems the speaker was asking his listeners to do three things: (1) analyze themselves; (2) review what they had been doing; and (3) determine if their product was keeping up with change—or with competition.

The advice again came to mind at the Midwest Regional Turf Conference when banquet speaker the Rev. Joseph Wick of Lafayette's First Christian Church pursued a similar line of thought.

"Would you hire yourself?" he asked. "Are you concerned about your marginal areas of performance. Are you attempting to improve yourself?"

Do you have a give-and-take attitude and a sense of humor? he continued, for these qualities are important toward getting along with others.

Even the most basic aspect of personal public relations, appearance, often is overlooked. "Every person has his audience," the Rev. Wick reminded.

"What is your attitude toward work?" he asked.

Across the board, businessmen say getting and keeping labor is the major problem. Perhaps the pertinent question is: Would you do the same

work, for the same hours, under the same conditions for the same pay and benefits?

On the return flight from the turf meeting, an article in TWA Ambassador magazine pursued the self-analysis, company analysis theme a step further—of what to do about bad practices.

Considering the changes in the industry and made by competition, if your company is lagging, you and it may be problem-oriented.

Take five recent projects, proposals, or ideas, the article suggested. Were they rejected because of the problems involved, or because the objectives were unsound?

Decision-making that leads to improvement and progress, implied the article, comes after:

(a) analyzing the idea or proposal for the benefits it will bring; (b) recognizing problems involved in attaining the objective; and (c) basing the final decision on benefits of (a) vs. the costs of (c).

"The road to 'nowhere' is paved with objectives that aborted in the problem stage," the article concluded.

Upon evaluation of the past five years, perhaps the most motivating question will be: Based upon what you have been doing, at the end of the next five years, will you still be in business?

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