

Some non-connected thoughts

This is not a post about marketing communications per se, but it does have to do with communications. This is also not in any particular order.

Heads in the sand

I wrote a few days ago about my stay in a Rochester hotel that did not live up to its advertising. Like I said then, there was nothing WRONG with the hotel, but it wasn't particularly right. Since I made my reservation online, I got the following email from the hotel:

Thank you for staying with us at the XXX. We sincerely hope you enjoyed your visit with us and that we were able to exceed your expectations. We look forward to serving you again when your travel plans bring you back to the XXX area.

They “hope” they exceeded my expectations. Well, they barely met my expectations but are they interested in knowing what my expectations and experiences were? No. I responded to them that if they cared about my expectations they would ask for feedback, and guess what, I have gotten no reply to that.

If you want to stick your head in the sand about your product or service, you are doing so at your own peril. If you are wondering why sales are down or employee morale is low, perhaps you need to FIND OUT instead.

How you present yourself (or, there are other people in the room)

I was at a couple professional development events yesterday. In both cases, there was at least one audience member who, during the Q&A, seemed to forget that there were other people in the audience. In the first case, the questioner went on and on about her business and finally got in a question (if asking

a question that applies only to you is asking a question). In the second case, the questioner shared a very personal, and in my opinion, inappropriate, story as a set up to her comment (no real question). Both these people clearly see the world as subordinate to their own personal needs and desires.

This last thought leads me to:

Self promotion, arrogance and the cult of celebrity

Although the rise of social media and citizen journalism is, in general, a good thing, there has also been a rise in the amount of people who think they are superior to all the rest of us, and now, because they can harness great followings and share their every thought with the masses, have become ubiquitous and often, quite obnoxious. I wrote recently about people who actually create Wikipedia entries for themselves (talk about arrogant), and yesterday, my friend and colleague, Daria Steigman told me about the hoopla surrounding a “famous” PR person and a comment on a blog. Read the whole thing here and draw your own conclusions.

However, let me add my conclusion, I think Kami Huyse is generally right that people have become arrogant, but what she doesn't realize is that she herself is being arrogant by claiming “I don't have time to Google you.” Why is her time more important? Now let me be clear—people who think that “Google me” is a response to other people who ask how to contact you or more about you are clearly arrogant. BUT, if I truly want to know more, chances are I WILL Google you.

In the end, it is up to each of us to give attention to the people we respect. If we don't respect someone or we think they are arrogant, then let's NOT follow them or read their blogs or buy their books or attend their parties or whatever. Self-promoting and arrogant people will eventually lose their followings IF enough people realize that just because other people think someone is great does not mean that he or she

really is great (after all, lots of people liked Stalin ...).

