

Zoo Story

Spring 2000

They had to speak with one voice to their investors, to deliver the message that they were a cohesive team worthy of financial backing. But the Zoo's Board Chair and its President had different styles of communicating, which muddled their message and prevented a proper public perception of them. The Nyman Method changed all that. Read how.

In many ways, it was like an IPO road show. Telling their story in a compelling way. Under pressure. Sometimes several times a day. Articulating a vision. Delivering the message: "We are a team. We are worthy of your support." The occasion was a series of more than 15 previews of the new primate preserve at the Philadelphia Zoo, at which the region's most influential government, philanthropic, educational and financial leaders would evaluate the Zoo's management team with an eye toward investing in the multi-million-dollar project.

At each gathering of between 100 and 200 people, Zoo Board Chair Barry Lyngard and Zoo President Pete Hoskins would have to project themselves as a well-oiled management machine, synergetic partners worthy of major financial consideration. The message had to be strong. It had to be cohesive. It had to inspire confidence that the investment was good, the money well spent. "Our goal was to project the team of Pete Hoskins and Barry Lyngard," Lyngard recalls. "I needed to demonstrate my support for management and he had to demonstrate his support for the Board. But that perception was not always there because our delivery styles were so different."

Hoskins, who has been in the public eye for much of his professional life, was an experienced and easy off-the-cuff speaker; Lyngard, a successful businessman, was more disciplined; he was comfortable with a written and well-rehearsed presentation. Together, the two styles made for an awkward delivery that did not inspire confidence in the team.

The Nyman Group, one of the Philadelphia region's top coaching, consulting and training companies, was brought in to help.

They did not get off to a running start. "I was resistant," Lyngard admits.

"While Barry thought that communication was important," explains Marilyn Nyman, president of The Nyman Group, "he thought that creating a message meant enhancing your delivery style, like learning what to do with your hands. He just didn't realize how highly analytical, organized and focused the process is to get a strategic message across. He



Marilyn Nyman (center), Barry Lyngard (right) and Pete Hoskins at new primate site.

kept saying, 'Can't we get to writing the speech?' But in the end, he worked with an open mind and was like a sponge."

Lyngard laughs about that now. "It was so totally different from what I anticipated," he says. "I questioned her approach at first, but the process just flowed. I gained so much confidence in her; I became accepting of her method and content." Indeed, there is a method to her madness, Marilyn Nyman says. It involves style, substance and connect-

ing with people. "You can't 'fix' the message until you truly understand what it is, until you personalize the vision, until you own it," she says. "And you have to understand the hearts and minds of each audience."

The two men worked both together and individually with Nyman over several months — a total of about ten hours in all — brainstorming the big issues then personalizing their individual messages — all before setting pen to paper for the actual speechwriting.

"For our relationship to seem seamless," Lyngard says, "our speeches had to be compatible, they had to be complementary to each other. We had to stress the same points, but not be repetitive. We were not CEO and President. We were both representatives of 'the company.'"

"It was very similar to a road show experience," Nyman says. "They went through the same process as a company going public: Investors want to see if the management team gets along. The analogy is clear. It's about the people, the personal chemistry."

The thing that surprised Lyngard the most, he says, was that Nyman did not come in and say, "Here's what we're going to do."

"It was a process that flowed," he says. "It was informal and casual and before we knew it, we were making progress.

"And she doesn't hesitate to suggest risky situations," the successful businessman adds with obvious admiration. "She pushes the envelope to the point that you never would have thought of that on your own."

Case in point: Lyngard says he was perceived

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President's Message



The Nyman Group, with President Marilyn S. Nyman in the middle.

In this high-tech world, you have to have high-touch communications, too. No matter what your competencies are, the success of your company hinges on your ability to communicate information and ideas effectively. That's where we come in.

This is an old story: Something is terribly wrong in the ship's boilerroom, an intricate maze of pipes, but no one can seem to fix it. The top expert in the field is brought in. He surveys the massive operation, taps one spot on one pipe with one tool, presents the captain with a bill for \$5,000 and leaves.

"That's amazing," the captain says with awe in his voice. "Nothing we tried worked, but he did it with just one tap. How did he do it?" He glances at the itemized bill in his hand. Suddenly, he understands. It says, simply:

One tap..... \$ 1
Knowing where to tap.....\$4,999

I like that anecdote because it speaks to the philosophy of The Nyman Group: Our business is communications consulting, coaching and training. But really, our business is problem-solving. Really, our business is helping you connect with whomever you need to connect — customers, employees, vendors, shareholders, investors. Make no mistake about it: The success of your business depends first and foremost on relationships, even — *especially* — in

this high-tech, dot-com world. Let me give you a few examples from our own experience:

Recently, we helped several young companies prepare for IPO road shows. Lacking strong track records — they are start-ups, after all — the new management teams had to demonstrate for potential investors that their futures were worth investing in. But, as is often the case, each team initially lacked synergy in its presentation. After working with us, however, all but one was able to develop and present its strategic message with unity and clarity. For one team, though, we saw that the disconnect among them was obviously glaring. Sensibly, its IPO was postponed.

We also helped a staid old Philadelphia firm with a solid track record and a long history of success project the image of its next-in-line to its shareholders who needed assurance about the company's succession planning process.

Another client came to us recently after it had successfully gone public. It was a company of bright young folks, all strategic thinkers. But the top team needed some "gray hairs;" it needed our help putting the infrastructure into place — everything from how to manage a workforce to how to negotiate with vendors.

Still another client was delighted with the front-of-the-house tele-professionalism help our organization provided.

What do all of these businesses have in common? All understand that the success of their business depends on the ability of everyone in the organization to connect with customers.

Clearly, this is the Technology Millennium. But make no mistake about it: High tech does not preclude high touch.

The Nyman Group's full-service, one-stop-shopping communications consulting, coaching and training capabilities provide the perfect balance of intuition and good diagnostics to meet your company's needs at every level.

In short: We know where to tap.

Meet the Team...

...in which we introduce another member of our team of experts...

In this issue:
KEENAN CRANE, Ph.D
on Leadership Development

What, exactly, does a specialist in organizational and leadership development *do*?

"I connect the dots," explains Keenan (Kenni) Crane. "That's what I do. I connect dots that people don't always see."

She's very self-assured, Kenni Crane. And why not? She has extensive experience in business-oriented change initiatives, and leadership and team development; and a strong record of helping organizations meet goals by building relationships to gain commitment.

She worked in organization and management development for the likes of Cigna and Scott Paper Company before becoming an independent consultant five years ago. She has been a member of the Nyman team for two.

Her special talent is her ability to see the big systems picture; she might begin with individual goals but soon she is able to align them with the goals of the organization as a whole. It's not easy. And not everyone can do it.

"I see issues that can be applied to the bigger group," she says. "It might be communication issues, it might be structural issues. You have to be pretty creative."

Recently, Kenni has been working successfully with a global company struggling to build, across international boundaries, the relationships necessary to accomplish its goals. How does she do it?

"I see how things are related," she says, "and I just connect the dots."

Mastering Skills for Success

The Nyman Group offers a wide range of professional training programs and workshops designed to improve communications within organizations. At the state-of-the-art Nyman Training Center in Horsham, Pennsylvania, we offer individual and small group instruction that strengthens key communication skills including writing, speaking, selling, negotiating, motivating and leading — all skills that are critical to personal and business success.

In addition to customized programs for employee groups, we offer training in specific areas. Here are some of our most popular training programs:

• Communication 2020

Forward moving leaders will learn how to present a clear, compelling picture of a believable future to all levels of the organization through this strategic and tactical approach to developing focused messages.

• Power Presentation Skills

Participants will learn the Nyman Method — an exclusive and practical technique to evaluate and improve presentation style and substance, deal with anxiety, organize content and visual aids and respond to questions.

• Real World Negotiation

Get what you want without giving in through Nyman's Negotiation Skills Program, a best-practice approach that promotes cooperative behavior, replaces coercion with persuasion and gets outcomes based on mutual behaviors.

• Writing for Results

Executives and managers will sharpen their business writing skills in this concentrated experience-based workshop and learn to cut writing time in half, establish the proper tone, eliminate jargon, develop their own voice, write for a diverse audience and overcome "writers block."

• Facilitating Successful Meetings

More in-depth and current than traditional effective meeting techniques, this interactive, process-oriented workshop teaches how to maximize participation, productivity and accountability.

• Customer Service/Tele-Professionalism

Capture the competitive edge for your company by building customer loyalty and trust. Participants will learn to project the right image and communicate with customers in person and on the phone in ways that leave everyone feeling satisfied and positive.

• Executive Media Coaching

Media interviews become positive experiences as participants learn how to define and polish their speaking style and enhance their public images. Skills acquired include delivering the 30-second sound bite, developing crisis communication strategies, understanding the dangers of "off the record" and answering hostile questions.

Upcoming Workshops

POWER PRESENTATION SKILLS

led by Marilyn S. Nyman
President & Founder of The Nyman Group
Executive coach/consultant, creator of
The Nyman Method

One-Day Workshop
9 AM to 4 PM

February 8
March 16
April 13

INTEREST-BASED NEGOTIATIONS

led by John Good
Consultant
specializing in dispute resolution

One-Day Workshop
9 AM to 4 PM

February 7
March 17
April 14

IMPACT COMMUNICATION

led by Jackie Reeves
Senior Training Consultant,
The Nyman Group

One-Day Workshop
9 AM to 4 PM

February 9
March 15
April 12

For information about these programs
or any of our other services
call 215.956.0300 or
e-mail dkline@nymangroup.com
And be sure to visit our Website at
www.nymangroup.com

Quips & Quotes

On public speaking...

“ Speeches are like babies — easy to conceive but hard to deliver.”
— *Unknown*

On communications...

“ If the only tool you have is a hammer, you tend to see every problem as a nail.”
— *Abraham Maslow, American psychologist*

On organizational dynamics...

“ Efficiency is doing things right. Effectiveness is doing the right things.”
— *Peter Drucker*

On leadership...

“ Trying to plan for the future without a sense of history, the historian Daniel Boorstin said, is like trying to plant cut flowers.

So how do we judge whether those who would tend our national garden are planting cut flowers? We should give them more quizzes! And make them give longer answers!

That's the opinion of the noted historian David McCullough

...The historian observes that we need to know much more about people before we put them in the Oval Office. He would test for 'groundedness,' and include...questions [such as] 'Who is your favorite president and why?' ...[and] 'What is your favorite poem?'

...The more he studies American history the more convinced he is that human nature matters for history.

'What's so fascinating is to see how often the ups and downs of history derive from that mysterious ingredient called personality,' he says. 'It's not a coincidence that the best president had a genuine sense of history.' ”

— *Liberties, by Maureen Dowd*
The New York Times
December 19, 1999

Zoo Story cont.

as “not being soft enough. It was suggested that one way to “humanize’ me would be to have me deliver a poem” — not an easy thing for a buttoned-up businessman to do. Nevertheless, Lyngard’s wife, Deidra Greenleaf Allan, who is a poet, wrote “The Promise,” which was integrated into Lyngard’s presentation. In splendid fashion, the poem speaks to the relationship between the primates and zookeepers:

*“In this garden, freed from fear, we are
drawn together
in a new dependency — you, for
survival, and we,
for a sense of unity with things forgotten”*

Before working with Nyman, the perception was that the two men were, somehow, not in step with each other. By the time they took their show on the road, however, it was clear they were in perfect harmony.

“By the last presentation, when the mayor was there,” Lyngard says today, “I knew we were a success. It was a great feeling.”

Making a Presentation? Don’t FLUNK This Test!

Here are the top 5 mistakes executives make in presentations:

Failure to analyze the hearts and minds of each audience

Lack of preparation/organization into 3-4 key themes

Underestimating the power of body language and tone of voice

No memorable ending

Keeping people too long!

The Buzz on Biz Books

by Roxanne Coady

As hungry as we are for information — especially if it can improve the way we work! — we often feel overwhelmed, particularly when it comes to business books. Some are better than others.

Here are some of the most useful:

Destination Z: The History of the Future *By Robert Baldock*

You would think with all the talk there’s been about “the new millennium” that more would be written about what will happen the day after Y2K arrives “and the day after that, and the year after that. But surprisingly little is — and that’s precisely what makes this book so important. Asserting that the world is changing faster than ever, the author offers five different scenarios for the new industrial framework that will emerge in the 21st century, scenarios based on the notion that consumers and suppliers will be the primary engines of change. The Bottom Line: The gap between “now” and “the future” collapses more every day, so it’s crucial for businesspeople to think constantly about where they are headed and always to be ready to change course.

CUSTOMERS.COM *By Patricia B. Seybold with Ronni T. Marshak*

The author, well-respected business consultant Patricia Seybold, is by no means a “techie,” and that may be precisely why her treatment of a very technical subject works so well: Anyone could understand it, thanks to her language and writing style. But the thing that really sets this book apart is the way Seybold integrates information about Internet technology with a real-world understanding of how it can actually be used in a company. The Bottom Line: If you’re going to do business on the Web—and who isn’t?—you must read this book.

IBM Redux: Lou Gerstner and the Business Turnaround of the Decade *By Doug Garr*

The subtitle of this book is “can one man change the course of business history?” The answer is yes — if his name is Lou Gerstner. Written by a former IBM speechwriter (although not with the company’s blessing), this book is a behind-the-scenes (and not always flattering) look at Gerstner’s strengths, weaknesses, and strategies. The bottom line: This book is less about IBM and more about Gerstner, about human nature, about having the knowledge—and the guts!—to effect change, to decide on a course of action and then follow it through; I was utterly fascinated.

Lend Me Your Ears: Great Speeches in History *By William Safire*

If you’ve ever needed an excerpt from a well-known speech for an article (or even a speech of your own), you’ll want this marvelous book on your own library shelf. Safire has collected more than 200 of the world’s most influential speeches; the orators range from Demosthenes to Salman Rushdie. The bottom line: This is an excellent, timeless compilation of some of history’s most graceful and compelling writing.

Roxanne Coady, CPA, former National Tax Director of BDO Seidman, is president of R.J. Julia Booksellers in Madison, CT.

For more information or to order books, call 203.245.3959 or 800.74.READS or visit her Website at: www.rjulia.com

The Leading Word is published quarterly by The Nyman Group, one of the top full-service training, coaching and consulting firms in the Philadelphia region. Its President and Founder, Marilyn S. Nyman, M.Ed., CCC, creator of the Nyman Method, is a Certified Speech Pathologist with 20 years experience as a communication skills specialist, executive speech coach and consultant. For more information on any topics discussed in *The Leading Word* or on any of The Nyman Group’s services and products, please contact

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