

## SHOW NOTES

July 14, 2008

### **Title: 2008 PRSA Executive Board's Perspective on Diversity**

PRSA executive leaders discuss the importance of PRSA's diversity initiative and look at the many roles that diversity plays in the public relations profession.

**Show Host:** Manny Ruiz, PRSA National Diversity Committee co-chair

**0:00**

Show begins

**0:26**

Announcer introduces host Manny Ruiz

**1:22**

Manny introduces show guests:

- PRSA Chair and CEO Jeffrey Julin, APR
- PRSA Chair-Elect Michael G. Chersonson, APR
- PRSA Treasurer Rosanna M. Fiske, APR
- PRSA Immediate Past Chair Rhoda Weiss, APR, Fellow PRSA
- PRSA Secretary Mary Deming Barber, APR, Fellow PRSA

**6:05**

Manny begins program, asks "Why does PRSA think diversity is so important? How does diversity benefit PRSA?"

**6:20 Jeffrey Julin**

- Public relations is about people, and we have to understand that people themselves are diverse.
- A diversity program must not only include efforts to create a diverse organization, but also to ensure that members understand the aspects of diverse communities.
- Diversity is a natural extension of the communications profession.
- Must recognize that globalization isn't coming - it's here, and organizations must reflect the diversity of society.

**8:35 Rhoda Weiss**

- PRSA has been committed to advancing diversity from the very beginning. Hawaii, a very diverse state, became one of the first PRSA Chapters.

**10:08 Manny Ruiz**

- How do we measure diversity?
- What are some new evolving competencies we are developing to measure diversity?

**10:50 Michael Chersonson**

- Have to respond to organizational needs.
- Test of good measurement: is there agreement across organization? Are the diversity programs supporting the overall objectives of the organization?
- Remember the four C's: 1) Combining qualitative and quantitative data to get deeper insights. 2) Customizing metrics to reflect what is important to the organization and its culture. 3) Collaborating (both traditionally and nontraditionally) to acquire information, to allow innovation/creativity. 4) Communicating: both internally and externally about accomplishments.

**15:29 Return from commercial break.**

**15:45 Manny**

- What is the definition of diversity? How is that different from affirmative action?

**15:55 Rosanna**

- Affirmative action is grounded in a moral responsibility to amend past wrongs. It has negative connotations to some.
- Diversity deals more with inclusion of cultures, social not moral responsibility.
- Unlike affirmative action, diversity was not introduced by the government. It was introduced by organizations, and is more market-driven.
- Discussion of what are current diversity trends and where we are going, also an opportunity to be proactive. Are there groups we are not addressing?

**18:30 Manny**

- What is the business case for diversity? What happens to business if they ignore it?

**19:00 Rhoda**

- Diverse groups' buying power is increasing exponentially.
- Diversity translates into a business advantage.

- Important to ask oneself these questions: Does my organization have a diversity committee? Are we known as a diverse company? Do we offer professional development/cross-cultural communications to diverse groups? How do we recruit/retain/mentor/advance diverse groups? What policies impact diverse populations, and how do we combat racism and sexism? Do we understand our own prejudices?
- Without diversity, a business cannot be successful.
- For example, in Los Angeles, the #1 TV news show is K-Mex, a Spanish-language program.

**21:50 Jeff**

- There is also an opportunity to determine with which identity group a person is identifying.

**23:00 Rosanna**

- Depending on the situation, diversity may take on different definitions.

**24:30 Rhoda**

- There are many cultural subsets, which bring many different ideas/identities.

**25:47 Mary**

- Need to look at how global society is translating into local community.

**27:10 Manny closes the show and invites listeners to tune in for the next program.**