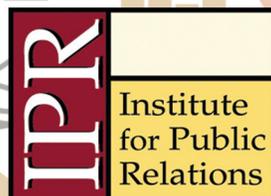


# TOP 10 PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH INSIGHTS OF 2015

FROM THE IPR BOARD OF TRUSTEES



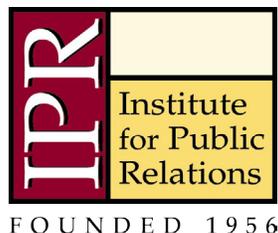
FOUNDED 1956

Compiled By:  
**Sarab Kochhar, Ph.D.**  
Director of Research  
Institute for Public Relations



For the second annual edition of the Top 10 Research Insights for 2015, the Institute for Public Relations Board carefully selected from a range of public relations research topics. The Board comprises senior-level executives and leading academics who chose these ten studies based on their rigor of methodology, findings, relevance to practice and accessibility. The second edition encompasses research ranging from evaluating Millennials' concern about reputation to studying diversity in the PR industry. Each year the IPR Board will continue to present the top research insights that uncover *the science beneath the art of public relations™*.

For full results, please click on the title of each study.



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*the science beneath the art of public relations™*



# TOP 10 PUBLIC RELATIONS RESEARCH INSIGHTS OF 2015

FROM THE IPR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Compiled by Sarab Kochhar, Ph.D.

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European Public Relations Education and Research Association

# MILLENNIALS ARE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR WORK REPUTATION THAN ANY OTHER GENERATION

By: Institute for Public Relations and Weber Shandwick

## Why this research is important:

According to a Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data, Millennials are now the largest share of the American workforce at 53.5 million people. This study leads to a greater understanding of how Millennials perceive their workplace reputation. For full results of the study, click on the title at the top of the page.

## Method:

An online survey was used to interview 600 employed U.S. adults across three generations currently in the workforce—Millennials (ages 18-34), Gen Xers (33-50), Boomers and beyond (51+).

## Key Findings:

- This study revealed Millennials thought more about their workplace reputation than any other generation.
- While all generations believed first impressions count, Millennials were slightly more sensitive to the importance of a first impression in the workplace.
- Seven in 10 US adult workers – who reported to be social media users – voted that their work reputation was more important than their social media reputation.
- One in five Millennials believed both work and social media reputations are equally important.



**Millennials think about their reputations at work more than any other generation. They are nearly twice as likely as Boomers to be obsessed with their reputations at work.**

**Think about own reputation at work all or most of the time**



**47%**  
Millennials



**37%**  
Gen X



**26%**  
Boomers+

# 02

## FEW TOP LEADERS ARE RATED VERY EFFECTIVE AT BOTH STRATEGY AND EXECUTION

By: Harvard Business Review

### Why this research is important:

While only 8 percent of top leaders are rated very effective at both strategy and execution, this research identified five leadership acts to help companies close the gap between both dimensions. For full results of the study, click on the title at the top of the page.

### Method:

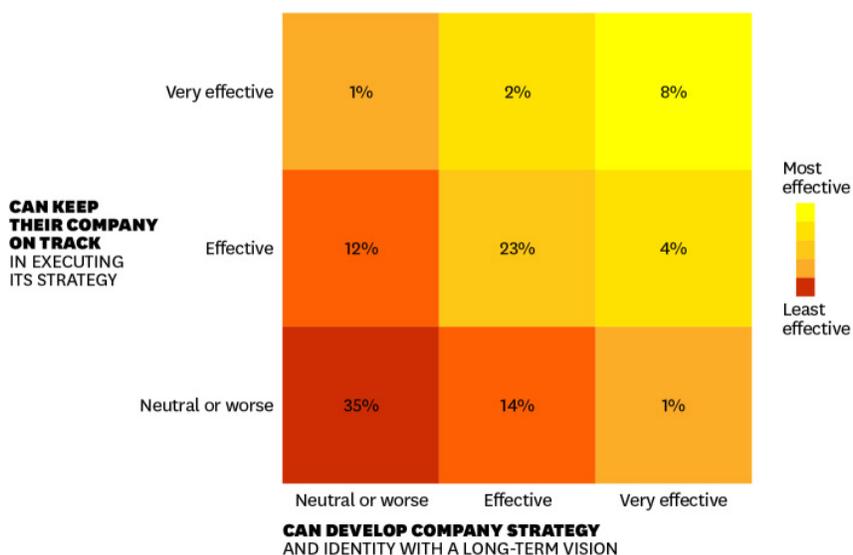
A 2013 study surveyed nearly 700 executives across a variety of industries to determine how respondents would rate the effectiveness of leaders at their company.

### Key Findings:

- Only 8 percent of top leaders were rated very effective at strategy and execution, 16 percent at either strategy or execution, and 63 percent were rated neutral or worse on at least one dimension.
- Of the 16 percent identified as top leaders effective in either strategy or execution, more than half are skilled in both dimensions—suggesting those who are better strategists will probably gain skill at execution, and vice versa.
- Five leadership acts were identified to help companies execute more effectively: commit to an identity, translate the strategic into the everyday, put the culture to work, cut costs to grow stronger and shape the future.

### Top Leaders' Effectiveness at Strategy Execution and Development

Few are good at both.



SOURCE "WHAT DRIVES A COMPANY'S SUCCESS?" BY PAUL LEINWAND AND CESARE MAINARDI, 2013

© HBR.ORG

# 03

## MORE AMERICANS ARE USING TWITTER AND FACEBOOK AS A NEWS SOURCE

By: Pew Research Center

### Why this research is important:

The Pew Research Center examines how the continued rise of Twitter and Facebook as a news source has implications for the way Americans learn about the world and their communities. For full results of the study, click on the title at the top of the page.

### Method:

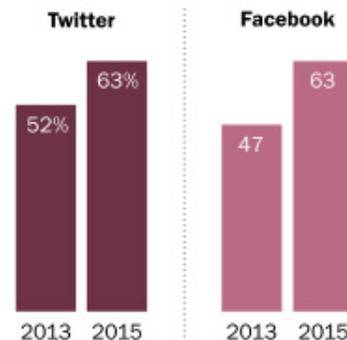
A survey of 2,035 U.S. adults, including 331 Twitter users and 1,315 Facebook users, was conducted over two weekends March 13-15, 2015 (N=1,018) and March 20-22, 2015 (N=1,017).

### Key Findings:

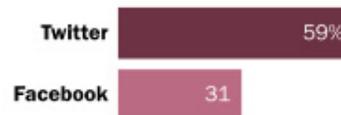
- The use of Twitter and Facebook as a news source is continuing to rise among current and new users as 63 percent of Twitter and Facebook users get their news on their respective sites. This is an increase from 2013 at 52 percent and 47 percent, respectively.
- Twitter was used for breaking news nearly twice as much as Facebook (59 percent vs. 31 percent).
- The rise of users getting news on Facebook or Twitter spans across nearly every demographic group.
- Facebook users were more likely to post and respond to content, while Twitter users were more likely to follow news organizations.

### Facebook and Twitter News Use is on the Rise

*% of \_\_\_ users who get news there*



*Of those who get news from \_\_\_ in 2015, percent who have kept up with a news event as it was happening*



Social Media and News Survey, March 13-15 & 20-22, 2015. Q2, Q4, Q7, Q11.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# 04

## MANAGING CHANGE EFFECTIVELY WITHIN CORPORATIONS IS CRITICAL TO BUSINESS SUCCESS

By: Ketchum Change

### Why this research is important:

This research provides insight on how the rising trend of continuous change within large corporations affects employees, and indicates four behaviors essential to success in changing business environments. For full results of the study, click on the title at the top of the page.

### Method:

Ketchum Change surveyed more than 500 leaders of large corporations across seven countries, gaining insights on how change affects employees.

### Key Findings:

- 95 percent of respondents stated managing change is critical to business success.
- “Change fatigue” is caused by senior leaders not recognizing the negative effect continuous change has on employees. Another cause of change fatigue is a disconnect on the impact of change between the C-suite and senior leaders.
- 74 percent said change fatigue existed in their companies. Of those respondents, 39 percent said it is highly prevalent.
- Only 28 percent of partners and C-suite executives think change fatigue is highly prevalent in their companies, compared to 42 percent at the SVP, director and VP levels.
- Smaller companies with fewer than 35,000 employees are less affected by change fatigue as only 29 percent reported it as highly prevalent, compared to 49 percent of large companies with more than 35,000 employees.
- Four behaviors are essential to success in changing environments: be transparent when communicating, pioneer mistakes as learning opportunities, stay dialed-in and engage employees, and be agile to stay energized when approaching change.

**Ketchum Change has identified the following four behaviors that are essential to success in changing environments:**

- ▶ **Transparent:** 73 percent say communicate in a human way
- ▶ **Pioneering:** 69 percent say mistakes as learning opportunities
- ▶ **Dialed-in:** 72 percent say engage employees in dialogue around changes
- ▶ **Agile:** 70 percent say be energized when approaching change

# 05

# THE “INTERNET OF THINGS” WILL INFLUENCE AND SHAPE THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

By: McKinsey Global Institute

### Why this research is important:

By exploring the current effect the Internet of Things (IoT)—explained by Forbes as “the concept of basically connecting any device with an on and off switch to the Internet (and/or to each other)”, this study examined the IoT’s potential economic impact, and highlights the importance of using data collected effectively to reach the highest potential value. For full results of the study, click on the title at the top of the page.

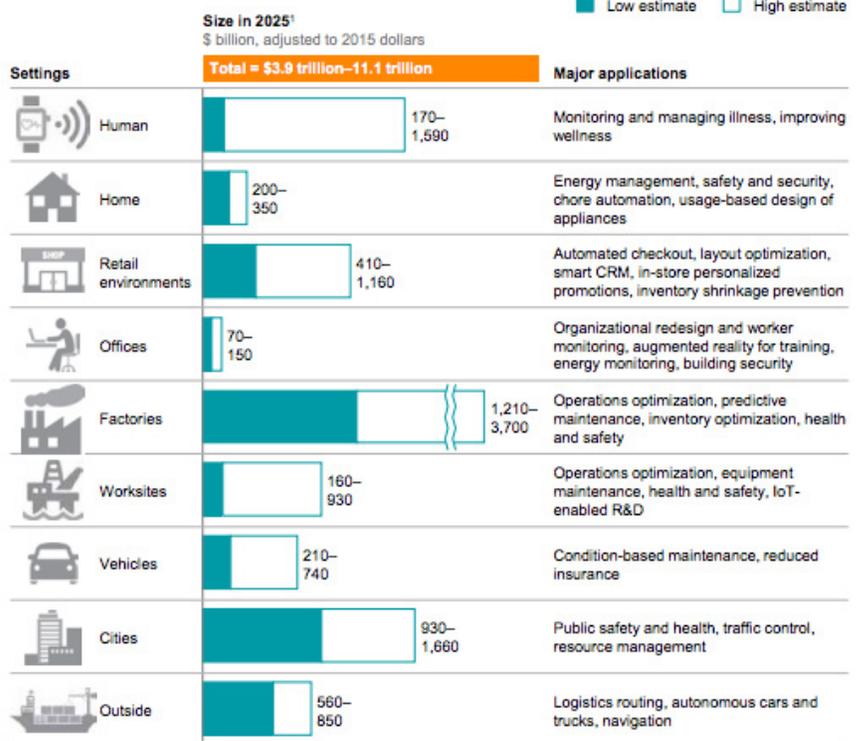
### Method:

The McKinsey Global Institute studied the IoT by analyzing more than 150 use cases. These uses of IoT ranged from personal fitness monitors to manufacturers utilizing sensors to maintain equipment and employee safety.

### Key Findings:

- By the year 2025, IoT is estimated to have a total potential economic impact of \$3.9 trillion to \$11.1 trillion, annually.
- The highest potential value from IoT can be gained through monitoring data for optimization and prediction, instead of only using it to detect and manage anomalies.
- IoT used between businesses is likely to hold more value than business-to-consumer uses, but consumer uses will attract the most attention and are still of high value.
- IoT has large potential in both developing and advanced economies, but advanced economies are projected to have slightly higher value per use.

Potential economic impact of IoT in 2025, including consumer surplus, is \$3.9 trillion to \$11.1 trillion



<sup>1</sup> Includes sized applications only.  
NOTE: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

SOURCE: McKinsey Global Institute analysis

# 06

## REDUCING GAPS BETWEEN TOP LEADERS AND EMPLOYEES WILL STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP, COMMUNICATION, AND RESULTS

By: Plank Center for Leadership in Public Relations

### Why this research is important:

The Plank Center Report Card uncovers a significant gap between PR leaders' evaluations of their own performance and how their employees' evaluate them. This research is paramount to strengthen the development of communication leaders and PR professionals. For full results of the study, click on the title at the top of the page.

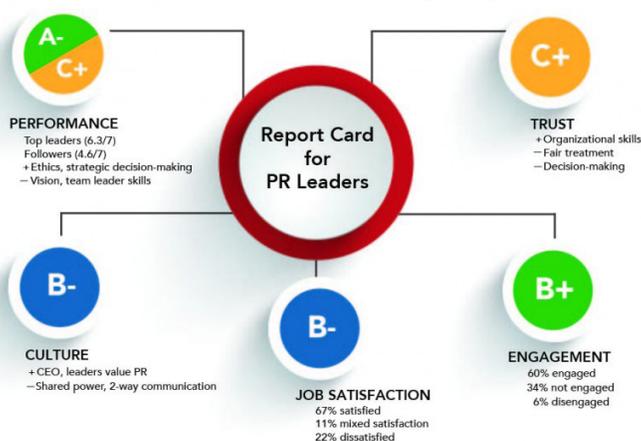
### Method:

In a survey completed by 838 U.S. public relations executives and managers, participants rated the performance of their top PR leader, the quality of culture at their workplace, and also evaluated themselves in regards to work engagement, trust in their organization, and job satisfaction. Grades were derived from the average scores of participant responses.

### Key Findings:

- Top PR leaders perceived their workplace performance very differently than their employees. Leaders gave themselves an “A-“ compared to a “C+” rating from their followers on performance, trust, work engagement, job satisfaction and organizational culture.
- Reducing gaps in organizational culture will strengthen leadership, communication and results.
- While trust in the organization received the lowest grade and was an issue at all levels, lower-level PR professionals were more distrusting of the organization.
- 67 percent of PR professionals were satisfied, or very satisfied, with their jobs. Agency PR professionals were most satisfied compared to those at companies or nonprofits.

### Just In: Plank Center Leadership Report Card



# 07

# ADAPTABILITY IS CRUCIAL TO ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS IN A FAST-CHANGING GLOBAL MARKET

By: PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC)

## Why this research is important:

The annual global survey of CEOs' opinions on the marketplace provides insights into industry disruptors, including changes in industry regulation and unprecedented digital change, challenging companies to adapt in many ways ranging from working across industry lines, to growing with technological innovations and diversifying partnerships. For full results of the study, click on the title at the top of the page.

## Method:

PwC conducted 1,322 interviews internationally with CEOs in 77 countries, across a range of industries. To ensure that views of CEOs across the world are represented fairly, a sample was selected based on the percentage of the total GDP of participating countries.

## Key Findings:

- Adaptability is crucial to an organization's success in the fast-changing global market.
- The technology sector is perceived as the main source of cross-sector competition.
- Technology and healthcare are the top targeted industries by companies in other sectors.
- 78 percent of CEOs site overregulation as a key concern.
- 80 percent of CEOs say key parts of their strategy involve mobile technologies and data analytics, and the majority of CEOs think investments in digital technology produced value for their business.
- Within the last three years, one-third of CEOs say they have entered new industries.
- CEOs are no longer only networking with traditional partners but are also diversifying networks through customers, NGOs, and even competitors to achieve greater success.



# 08

## DIVERSITY WITHIN THE WORKPLACE CORRELATES TO IMPROVED MARKET SHARE

By: Center for Talent Innovation

### Why this research is important:

This research suggests innovation is halted by homogeneity, and reveals many companies are missing out on increased market share and new market expansion because of a lack of diversity in the workforce. A diverse environment, managed by supportive leadership, is a strong source of innovation that can bring growth to business. For full results of the study, click on the title at the top of the page.

### Method:

CTI conducted a survey online with 1,800 U.S. participants, ages 21 to 62 who hold a bachelor's degree, and work for a company with more than 50 employees. More than 40 percent of respondents worked at multinational corporations. Additionally, 60 one-on-one interviews were

### Key Findings:

- Diversity in the workplace, backed by leaders who support difference and encourage employees to voice opinions and ideas, leads to growth and ongoing innovation.
- Two-dimensional (2D) diversity describes leadership that exhibits at least three types of inherent and acquired diversity. Employees at companies with 2D diversity were more likely to “take risks, challenge the status quo, and embrace a diverse array of inputs.”
- Diverse individuals can better identify needs within a market for like-consumers.
- Ideas shared in a workplace supportive of diversity were more likely to get deployed into the marketplace (35 percent vs. 20 percent, respectively).
- Data strongly suggests innovation is suppressed by homogeneity.
- Only 22 percent of employees worked for companies with 2D diversity.



**Inherent diversity** (gender, race, age, religious background, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, disability, nationality)

**Acquired diversity** (cultural fluency, generational savvy, gender smarts, social media skills, cross-functional knowledge, global mindset, military experience, language skills)

**TWO-DIMENSIONAL (2D) DIVERSITY** describes leadership that exhibits at least three kinds of both:

# THE PUBLIC RELATIONS INDUSTRY MUST WORK HARDER TO GROW AND DEVELOP A DIVERSIFIED WORKFORCE

By: PRSA Foundation

## Why this research is important:

This study explores the progress of diversifying the public relations industry, and the experiences, opportunities and challenges of younger professionals of Hispanic and African American ethnicity—revealing a more concentrated effort is needed to cultivate a stronger multicultural workforce. For full results of the study, click on the title at the top of the page.

## Method:

This study consisted of qualitative research with more than one dozen interviews, two focus groups, and two separate online surveys. All 18 focus group participants were young PR professionals working full-time and identified as Hispanic or African American. The first survey targeted young Hispanic (42.6 percent) and African American (60.4 percent) PR professionals, garnering 108 completed surveys from participants who graduated from 2008 to 2014, all between the ages of 23 to 30. The second survey was aimed toward employers of young Hispanic and African American professionals, and was completed by 111 employers. Out of the second survey respondents, 24

## Key Findings:

- Of both young professionals and employers, five out of six survey respondents think the PR industry has not demonstrated much success in recruiting a diverse workforce. Most participants said the industry was ‘somewhat successful’, but not showing enough meaningful change to be ‘successful’.
- About two-thirds of young professionals were satisfied with their job. Less than 10 percent of young professionals felt their racial or ethnic identity was seen as a liability in the organization where they were first employed. However, nearly 43 percent of young professionals sampled said colleagues do not treat them with genuine respect.
- Mentorship is seen as very important, regardless if both parties are of the same ethnicity, yet only one in three of young professionals reported they had an adviser who understood their needs as an aspiring African American or Hispanic PR professional.
- One-third of respondents felt they have to spend longer in entry-level positions, and must be more qualified than their Caucasian counterparts in similar positions.

# MEASUREMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL LISTENING ARE VITAL IN STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

By: European Public Relations Education and Research Association

## Why this research is important:

The European Communication Monitor 2015 explores what professionals are doing to adapt to the fast-changing global communication environment, and how they strive to excel in strategic communication. It provides key insights revealing the need for higher levels of measurement within the industry, as well as listening and messaging. For full results of the study, click on the title at the top of the page.

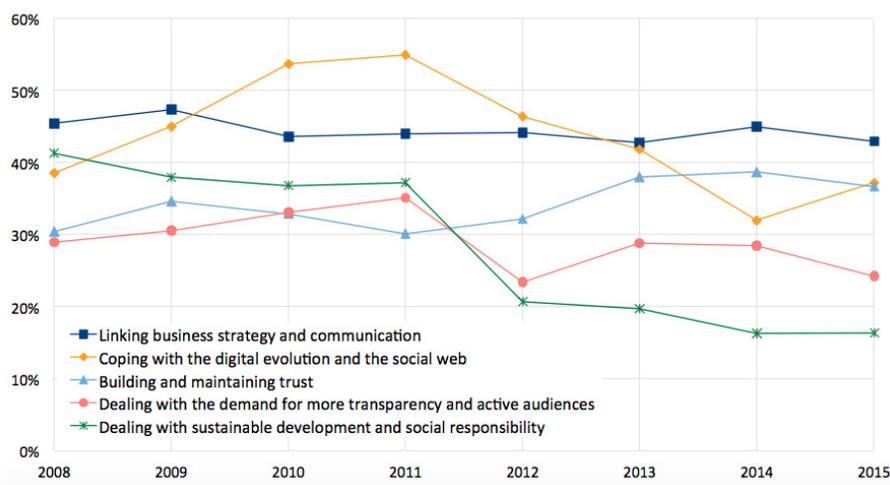
## Method:

This study surveyed 2,253 communication professionals across 41 countries.

## Key Findings:

- Linking communication and business strategy continued to be a top challenge for the profession as practitioners strive to become a part of strategic management within organizations.
- Nearly 86 percent of respondents reported a need to integrate more communication activities within organizations. However, compared to 2011, there is barely any growth in intra-organizational collaboration.
- 85 percent of respondents reported their organization had a communication strategy, yet only 55 percent had an organizational listening strategy.
- Only 36 percent reported evaluating the effect of communication on intangible or tangible resources, yet 76 percent see their major role to organizational objectives as building intangible assets such as brands and reputation—revealing a disconnect between what communicators are claiming to do versus what is actually being measured.

Top five issues for communication management in Europe since 2008





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### **About the Institute:**

IPR is an independent nonprofit foundation dedicated to *the science beneath the art of public relations*™. The organization focuses on research that provides timely insights and applied intelligence that professionals can put to immediate use.

### **Key Research Areas and Commissions:**

#### ***Measurement Commission***

The IPR Measurement Commission is composed of researcher-practitioners and thought-leaders in public relations research, measurement, and evaluation drawn from four segments of the global public relations industry: (i) corporations, government, and non-profits; (ii) public relations agencies; (iii) research firms; and (iv) academia. The mission is to develop and promote standards and best practices for research, measurement, and analytics that contribute to ethical, strategic, and effective public relations.

#### ***The Coalition for PR Research Standards***

The Coalition for Public Relations Research Standards—a group in which the Institute for Public Relations is a member—has developed voluntary PR standards in areas ranging from traditional media and social media measurement to the communications lifecycle, ROI, and ethics. GE, GM, USAA, McDonald's USA, and the University of Florida, along with about 93 other organizations have already pledged their commitment to deploying these standards within their organizations. Now, we invite you to join the growing list of those leading the way toward established standards.

#### ***Organizational Communication Research Center***

The Commission on Organizational Communication completed and published a qualitative study on Best-in-Class Practices in Employee Communications followed with a quantitative study testing best practices with several hundred global leaders for employee communication. IPR's Organizational Communication Research Center is a comprehensive growing database of research articles and information about employee communication. With over 90 abstracts, it is truly the go-to resource for employee communication practitioners who understand the science underlying their work.

#### ***Science of Social Media Research Center***

As social media continues to have a tremendous impact on the public relations profession, the IPR Social Media Research Center is an important resource for both practitioners and academics. This repository shows how social and emerging media are impacting networking and relationship building, learning and influencing trust, building influence, improving reputation, and controlling the socialization of ideas in PR. The research center knowledge is becoming a major element of IPR professional development offerings. In 2014, the editors created a social media case study competition for practitioners, faculty and graduate students with the top three winners receiving a total of \$1750 in prizes.