

Communicator Roles

The extensive and lengthy analysis of practitioner roles in this chapter is driven by three factors. First, this constitutes the only extensive review of previous roles research in more than a dozen years (see Dozier, 1992). Second, the Excellence study examined practitioner roles at several levels of analysis. Roles were measured in terms of departmental expertise or knowledge to enact various roles, the actual roles enacted by each department's top communicator, and the role expectations of the organization's CEO (or other senior-ranking executive). To make sense of findings at these multiple levels of analysis requires considerable deconstruction. Third, practitioner roles play a central role in the overall Excellence of communication departments and organizations.

Roles are abstractions about the patterned behaviors of individuals in organizations, a way of classifying and summarizing the myriad activities that an individual might perform as a member of an organization. By playing roles, individuals mesh activities, yielding predictable outcomes. Arguably, organizations are defined as systems of roles. In public relations, the concept of practitioner role has been systematically studied for about 25 years; such research places practitioner roles at the nexus of a network of important antecedent concepts and professional consequences. In the Excellence study, new role measures were developed and used to expand this important theoretical area.

THE CONCEPT OF ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE

In their early conceptual work, Daniel Katz and Robert Kahn (1966, 1978) sought to bridge the gap between sociology and psychology by assigning a central place to roles enacted by individuals in organizations. Building on the work of Linton (1936), Newcomb (1951), T. Parsons (1951), and Merton (1957), Katz

and Kahn argued that formal organizations are contrivances best understood as open systems made up of acts and events involving people linked together through sets of ongoing relationships and behaviors. An individual in an organization occupies an *office*, such as vice president for corporate communication, which is a point in organizational space defined by its relationships to other offices and the organization as a whole. Each office has an associated set of behaviors that the occupant of that office is expected to enact.

Whereas office is defined by such relatively static indicators as job title and job description, organizational *role* is defined as "recurring actions of an individual, appropriately interrelated with the repetitive activities of others so as to yield a predictable outcome" (Katz & Kahn, 1978, p. 189). Roles, then, are measured by what individuals do repetitively in their day-to-day work. Related concepts include role sending, role expectations, and role receiving. *Role sending* is the social process whereby relevant officeholders in an organization prescribe and proscribe the behaviors that define role expectations for an individual officeholder. With particular regard to roles of communicators, relevant officeholders include members of the dominant coalition. *Role expectations*, the aggregate of the activities and behaviors expected of the officeholder, are especially important when those of the top communicator do not mesh with those of the dominant coalition. Role expectations generally reflect conceptions of the role held by others, modified by "impressions of the abilities and personality of the officeholder" (Katz & Kahn, 1978, p. 190). Such modification is especially relevant when core competencies of the communication department are considered.

The top communicator, defined in the Excellence study as the senior administrative or management officeholder in the communication or public relations department, plays a key role as both transmitter and interpreter of expectations about communication originating with the dominant coalition, regarding communication's role and function in the organization. The *role received* by top communicators is subjective, constructed from role-sending messages from the dominant coalition, but also learned by top communicators through formal education and previous work experiences. The top communicator's role is also affected by what subordinates in the communication department communicate about their expectations, as well as the material conditions of their work. Role sending and role receiving rarely occur through an epiphany; rather, a feedback loop permits the ongoing modification of the role sent and received. The concept of feedback loop plays a crucial role in the demand-delivery loop, a concept developed to help explain the findings of the Excellence study.

Organizational Roles in Public Relations

Launched by Glen Broom in the 1970s (Broom & Smith, 1978, 1979), roles research in public relations sought to abstract distinct roles from the day-to-day activities of public relations professionals. Broom conceived of practitioners as

consultants to dominant coalitions, with each role providing a distinct form of assistance. Initially, five roles were explicated; however, pretesting led Broom to reduce the number of roles to four.

The *expert prescriber* was identified in the literature as the organization's knowledgeable expert on all matters relating to public relations (Broom, 1982; Broom & Smith, 1978, 1979; Cutlip & Center, 1971; Newsom & Scott, 1976). Much like the traditional doctor-patient relationship, the expert prescriber makes recommendations and the dominant coalition complies. Broom drew from the consulting literature (Kurpius & Brubaker, 1976; Walton, 1969) to conceptualize the *communication facilitator* role. Acting as a "go-between," the communication facilitator is deeply involved in process, attending to the quality and quantity of information flowing between the dominant coalition and key publics. Broom conceptualized the *problem-solving process facilitator* as a practitioner assisting a dominant coalition to think systematically and solve public relations problems for the organization. The elements of this role were drawn from organization theory and development (Baker & Schaffer, 1969; Schein, 1969). The fourth role that Broom conceptualized was that of *communication technician*. In this role, the practitioner acts as a technical services provider, generating the collateral materials needed to implement a communication or public relations program planned through another communication role. That is, the communication technician was conceptualized as implementing communication programs planned by others in the organization. Broom regarded practitioners enacting this role predominantly as "journalists-in-residence," hired away from news organizations for their media relations and production skills.

OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Following an early experiment with consulting roles, Broom (1982) operationalized six behavioral measures for each of the four roles he conceptualized (Broom, 1982), using a 1-7 scale that ranged from *never* to *always*. Survey respondents were told that the statements described different aspects of what public relations practitioners do. If the statement described something that never occurred in the practitioner's work, the respondent was instructed to circle 1 (never). If it always occurred, circle 7 (always). If that aspect happened occasionally, the respondent was instructed to circle the number that best described his or her work.

In the initial use of the 24-item battery of role measures, Broom conducted a survey of a systematic sample of current members of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). The role measures proved generally reliable, with Cronbach alpha coefficients as follows: expert prescriber, .93; communication facilitator, .79; problem-solving process facilitator, .90; and communication technician, .84 (Broom, 1982). This 24-item set has been used extensively in public relations roles research over the last 20 years.

The Manager-Technician Dichotomy

In analyzing the initial survey data, Broom (1982) discovered three roles that he had conceptualized as distinct were, at the operational level, highly inter-correlated. The expert prescriber, the communication facilitator, and the problem-solving process facilitator are all conceptually distinct roles that practitioners enact simultaneously in their actual, day-to-day work. However, all three conceptual roles are not correlated with the communication technician role. The rotated factor matrix of the item set from the 1979 survey, as well as a follow-up study of the same population (PRSA members) in 1991, are provided in Dozier and Broom (1995) for the manager role and the technician role.

Broom's finding prompted Dozier (1983, 1984c) to conduct exploratory factor analysis on data from three practitioner surveys, from which he inductively generated the *communication manager* role. The communication manager enacts aspects of the expert prescriber, problem-solving process facilitator, and communication facilitator roles. Those enacting the communication manager role make communication policy decisions and are held accountable—by themselves and by others—for the success or failure of communication programs. The communication manager role involves the dominant coalition in a systematic planning process and serves as a catalyst for decision making. Such practitioners also facilitate communication between the dominant coalition and publics by informing management of public reactions to organizational policies, procedures, or actions—or all three.

Minor Roles

In analyzing the data, Dozier (1983) found that several minor roles emerged, in addition to the manager and technician roles. These minor roles included the *communication liaison* role, which he argued was similar to the manager role but thwarted by organizational constraints from policymaking authority. In the Excellence study, this minor role was conceptualized and operationalized as the *senior adviser* role. In addition, Dozier (1983, 1984c) identified a *media relations specialist* role, which he argued was a variation on the communication technician role, specializing in external or public media rather than internal communication. However, these minor roles have proved relatively unstable across surveys. The manager and technician roles, however, have remained remarkably stable from survey to survey, as indicated by factor analytic solutions and reliability coefficients.

Dominant Role

For certain analytic purposes, communicators' scores on the manager and technician scales can be compared and communicators classified as either predominantly managers or predominantly technicians, depending on the higher score.

Dominant role is an operational indicator that a communicator is either a manager or a technician, based on role activities most frequently enacted. Dominant role can be determined by comparing the means of items that make up the manager and technician roles and then assigning dominant role status to the higher of the two means. A second approach is to compare factor scores for the two roles, which are first normalized. The dominant role is assigned to the higher of the two factor scores.

However dominant role is operationalized, this statistical artifact allows the communicator's role status to be treated as dichotomous, as either/or. This variable is useful for certain statistical analyses (e.g., chi-square, *t* test, *F* test). However, use of dominant role involves the ultimate of simplifications because it dichotomizes the rich nuances captured by the original 24-item role set. Every communicator enacts aspects of the manager and technician roles, as well as all four of the original conceptual roles. Further, the role set itself is a simplification of the fluid and complex organizational activities that professional communicators and public relations practitioners enact each day. This compression of practitioner roles into this simply dichotomy has been criticized strongly by a number of public relations scholars (e.g., Creedon, 1991; Toth & L. Grunig, 1993; Toth, Serini, Wright, & Emig, 1998)—primarily because they believe the dichotomy disguises the nature of work done by female practitioners.

Creedon (1991), in particular, considered the idea of separate roles to be a false dichotomy. She said that emphasis on two discrete roles has led to a "hierarchy of two seemingly dissimilar roles—the manager who decides policy and the technician who implements 'his' policies" (p. 79). She offered a counter-perspective: "Some technicians process information, some produce creative products, and some manage the process as well as produce the product" (p. 78). She cited research suggesting an overlap between roles: Women participate in decision making, considered a managerial activity, but at a lower level than do men. She also summarized research indicating that decision-making activity exists in other "apparently nonmanagerial categories, variously described as linking, liaison, or information-processor role" (p. 71).

Whereas Creedon revisioned the technician role to demonstrate that female technicians actually perform a number of managerial activities, Toth and L. Grunig (1993) focused on "the devaluation of women who perform managerial tasks similar to those performed by men" (p. 173). Toth and L. Grunig conducted separate factor analyses for men and women of a set of managerial activities and another set of technical activities. After comparing the profiles, they concluded that "The managerial activities of the men were more 'managerial' in nature, involving the counseling and policy-making role and then evaluating and supervising the work of others" (p. 170). Women performed a wider range of managerial activities than men, especially middle-management activities. These middle-management activities included such tasks as supervising the work of others, meeting with clients and executives, meeting with peers, con-

ducting research, implementing new programs and events, making media contacts, and handling correspondence and telephone calls.

The rationale for the oversimplification of practitioner behavior is rooted in a set of nomothetic presuppositions. The goal of using abstractions like organizational roles is to provide a partial description and explanation of practitioner behavior across a wide range of organizational settings, as well as to test relationships between role indicators and the hypothesized antecedents and consequences of role enactment. The utility of such oversimplifications is best judged by their contributions to the theory and practice of public relations. In some research, the simplifications have been useful, but in the case of roles of women a simple dichotomy seems to have disguised the true roles of women in public relations.

Role Ambiguity

Katz and Kahn (1978) noted that officeholders are not simply passive recipients of roles sent but actively construct their roles from the myriad messages and consequences about what is expected or proper for an office. *Role ambiguity* is the degree to which these signals and consequences are unclear or inconsistent. Ahlwardt (1984) provided evidence that communicators in organizations are subject to high levels of role ambiguity, because the role sent by the dominant coalition and immediate supervisor may be at odds with the communicator's professional role expectations learned through formal education or communicated by the professional associations (Dozier, 1992). Indeed, top communicators in the Excellence study used no less than 15 different job titles to describe the office of top communicator.

On the other hand, role ambiguity provides communicators with the wiggle room needed to enact role behaviors in a strategic and proactive manner, a process called "role taking." *Role taking* is a concept similar to role received, except that it places greater emphasis on the officeholder as an active, reflexive agent (rather than passive recipient of role messages), able to enact role behaviors outside those assumed by dominant coalitions. Culbertson (1991), for example, argued that the technician role is "highly codified and repetitive," whereas the process facilitation aspects of manager role enactment allow "subtle role taking" by communicators (p. 54). This, in turn, allows communicators to use role enactment as a means of defining or redefining the communication function as excellent.

RESEARCH ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES OF COMMUNICATORS

In the last decade, the organizational role of communicators has been one of the most extensively studied concepts in public relations research. In a review of the most frequently cited works in the area of public relations (including the *Journal*

of *Public Relations Research*, *Public Relations Review*, *Public Relations Research Annual*, and *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*) from 1990 to 1999. Pasadeos, Renfro, and Hanily (1999) found that the two most frequently cited journal articles were Broom's (1982) publication of gender differences in role playing and Broom and Dozier's (1986) first published explication of the manager-technician dichotomy. This citation network study led Pasadeos et al. to conclude that public relations roles was "the largest category of most cited works" (p. 39).

Such interest in the concept is due, in part, to the number of professional issues that are linked to communicator roles. Antecedent to role enactment are concepts of gender and professional experience. Linked to role enactment is the degree to which the communicator uses research to scan the organizational environment and to evaluate the effectiveness of communication programs. Several studies have used roles to help explain the use of new media technologies in public relations. Role enactment has also been linked to participation in management decision making, strategic planning, participation in issues management, and encroachment on the public relations function. Role enactment has been tied to salaries paid to communicators and the satisfaction they report from their work. In addition to the Excellence study, roles research has been conducted in other nations and cultures.

Gender, Professional Experience, and Roles

One of the most hotly debated issues regarding roles research has been the issue of gender, professional experience, and roles. Broom (1982) first noted that women tended to cluster in the communication technician role; men tended to play the conceptual components of the manager role (e.g., expert problem-solving process facilitator, and communication facilitator) more frequently. In subsequent research, Dozier, Chapo, and Sullivan (1983) argued that role segregation by gender helped explain income disparities between male and female communicators of equal professional experience. Broom and Dozier (1986) noted that their panel study of PRSA members indicated that women performed manager role activities less frequently than men, but not significantly so. However, women performed technician role activities significantly more frequently than men. This finding was true for both the 1979 survey and the 1985 survey. Toth and L. Grunig (1993) found a similar relationship in their survey of 1,003 PRSA members in 1991, using a more parsimonious set of measures. On the other hand, Zoch, Patterson, and Olson (1997) conducted a survey of 44 public relations practitioners working for the 91 school districts in South Carolina and found that men performed manager role activities significantly more often than did women. Men were especially active with regard to strategic planning and policy decision making.

Gender discrimination plays an important role in this process of role segregation. Hon (1995) provided a detailed feminist critique of a wide range of factors and conditions that affect women in public relations. One popular rival explanation is that women in public relations play the manager role less frequently because they have fewer years of professional experience. An important stream of research regarding roles and gender are the three surveys of public relations practitioners in 1979, 1985, and 1991, under the direction of Broom (1982; Broom & Dozier, 1986; Dozier & Broom, 1995). By comparing manager and technician role enactment by men and women, while controlling for professional experience, data from the 1979 survey showed that men enacted the manager role more frequently, even after controlling for years of professional experience in public relations and length of employment with current employer. However, the same analysis of the 1991 data set indicated that, although women enacted the manager role less frequently than men, the difference had more to do with years of professional experience and length of employment with their current employer than with gender per se (Dozier & Broom, 1995). More significantly, the antecedent variables that Dozier and Broom analyzed from the 1979 and 1991 surveys (education, number of communicators in department, years of professional experience, length of employment with current employer, and gender) accounted for less than a third of the variance in manager role enactment.

The conventional wisdom holds that an entry-level communicator enters the practice with the expectation that he or she will enact the technician role predominantly. With more professional experience, practitioners move from the technical role to management responsibilities. However, a panel study by Broom and Dozier (1986) of 206 communicators who completed questionnaires in 1979 and 1985 showed that the process of increased enactment of the manager role and decreased enactment of the technician role did not follow this progression for all practitioners. Although manager role scores increased and technician role scores decreased from 1979 to 1985, this pattern was more pronounced for men than for women.

Professional experience is, indeed, positively related to enacting the manager role. However, the explained variance in manager role enactment accounted for by years of professional experience is small. In a 1979 survey of PRSA members, years of professional experience in public relations accounted for 7% of the variance in manager role enactment. In a follow-up survey of the same respondents in 1985, a more mature sample of communicators indicated that years of professional experience accounted for less than 1% of the explained variance in manager role enactment. Similarly, in a 1991 survey of PRSA and IABC members, a systematic sample indicated that years of professional experience in public relations work accounted for only 1% of the variance in manager role enactment. Clearly, role enactment makes a key contribution to understanding public relations and communication management practices.

professional experience and job titles do not illuminate relationships with concepts important to excellence in public relations and communication management.

L. Grunig, Toth, and Hon (2001) reviewed this program of research by Broom, Dozier, and their colleagues as well as research they had conducted in two Glass Ceiling studies commissioned by PRSA in 1990 and 1995. After analyzing the 1990 data set, Toth and L. Grunig (1993) had concluded "that the failure to promote women derives not only from gender and years of professional experience, but from differences in the on-the-job experience in public relations. Although female managers in public relations perform managerial tasks, they continue to perform the technical tasks, too. In a sense, women are 'doing it all'" (L. Grunig et al., 2001, p. 224).

L. Grunig et al. (2001) analyzed the role profiles of men and women produced by the 1990 and 1995 surveys. We discussed the 1990 profiles earlier when we pointed out that dichotomizing measures of roles disguises the fact that women combine technical and managerial activities more than men. Toth and L. Grunig (1993) also found that women engage in more middle-management activities and men in more top-management activities.

When L. Grunig et al. (2001) compared the 1995 factor profiles for men and women with the 1990 profiles, they found that both men and women concentrated more on middle-management activities in 1995. They interpreted this change as a loss in status of the public relations function, for both men and women. They concluded that this change resulted from the "economic downsizing of the early 1990s, when there were many reports of senior public relations managers losing their jobs" (p. 247). Nevertheless, the 1995 profile showed that men did not lose as much ground as women: "Women lost ground in the range of activities that could have helped their professional advancement. In other words, the picture that emerges between 1990 and 1995 suggests that women are farther from, rather than closer to, breaking through the glass ceiling in public relations" (p. 248).

L. Grunig et al. (2001) concluded that professional experience does not produce a change from a technical role to a managerial role for women as much as it does for men. Focus group data from the 1991 and 1995 Glass Ceiling studies provided details about these differences in the experiences of men and women. First, women in the focus groups said they were more willing than men to do technical work as well as managerial work, to accept a dual manager-technician role, and "to help out wherever needed" because it was not "beneath them" (p. 243). One woman who participated in a focus group explained it this way:

Are we undermining ourselves when they come to me and say, "How come you haven't had time to do these strategic-level things?" and it's because I've been taking care of the technical things that need to be done. I think we are doers. We'll do whatever needs to be done without regard for whether this is beneath me or

not. But in the grand scheme of things, does that work against us in the perception of others . . . when they see us typing labels?

Second, participants in the focus groups suggested that women play a dual role more than men because they are less likely to delegate work. "This is how one man explained what he has experienced. Technical work such as answering phones, running the copy machine, and stacking envelopes is included as part of female management's 'daily repertoire.' However, he said, 'The male managers that I know seem to delegate that'" (p. 245). Third, female managers in the focus groups talked more about "people" concerns whereas men focused on the strategic aspects of management. "Women said they felt pressured to do more, rather than to strategize more" (p. 250).

L. Grunig et al. (2001) also identified a third factor in the 1990 and 1995 Glass Ceiling data that they called the "agency factor," a factor that described the roles of men and women working in public relations firms. Broom, Dozier, and their colleagues had excluded public relations practitioners in firms from their analyses because they had found that the roles are different from those of in-house practitioners and because agency personnel perform different roles for different clients. L. Grunig et al. said that economic downsizing in the 1990s resulted in many men starting their own firms after they lost their in-house jobs. Furthermore, they said:

[The agency profile reflects] the expert prescriber role introduced by Broom and Smith in 1979; but it also included the skills of handling correspondence, making telephone calls, and making media contacts. As such we also can link it to the role of communication liaison. In this factor—more collaborative and research-based than the two major roles—we see such additional activities as meeting with clients, executives, and peers; counseling management; and doing research. (p. 246)

The agency profile, however, included more activities for men than it did for women. In particular, "Men in this role do more work associated with the managerial role than do women" (p. 246).

Research on gender differences in the roles of men and women in public relations, in summary, has played a valuable role in understanding the differing experiences of men and women in the profession. In a broad sense, the research shows that men are more likely to be managers and women to be technicians. However, this broad difference conceals a great deal of difference in the experiences of women in public relations. Both male and female technicians typically do managerial work as well as technical work. Because there are more women in the technical role, however, this fact disguises the extent to which women engage in managerial activities. When women do managerial work, they tend to do it as middle managers rather than top managers, which is more the province of men. Because of the willingness to nurture others, to not delegate work, and

to "do it all," women also have fewer professional experiences that prepare them for top management in comparison with men.

Roles and Organizational Environments

An organization's perceived environment can be, among other descriptors, simple or complicated, placid or turbulent (Duncan, 1972; Emery & Trist, 1965; Terreberry, 1968; Thompson, 1967). Pearce and Robinson (1982) defined an organization's *environment* as all conditions and forces that affect the organization's strategic options but are beyond the organization's control. Dozier (1992) argued that manager role enactment should increase as an organization's environment becomes more complicated or more turbulent.

However, dominant coalitions do not respond to an objective organizational environment. Rather, dominant coalitions respond to *representations* (or enactments), subjective sets of shared perceptions of the organization and its environment that members use to make decisions (White & Dozier, 1992). Indeed, the boundary between the organization and its environment is perceptual and fuzzy, described as "an arbitrary invention of the organization itself" (Starbuck, 1976, p. 1078). The communicator's organizational role becomes crucial in the construction and modification of such representations, because communicators serve as *boundary spanners* (see Aldrich & Herker, 1977), organizational members who frequently interact with the organization's environment and who gather, synthesize, and relay information about the environment on to the dominant coalition and others inside the organization (White & Dozier, 1992).

Organizations and communicators can engage in boundary-spanning activities with varying degrees of formality and sophistication. Organizations can formalize management information systems (MIS) to collect and organize information in forms suitable to different points and levels in the decision-making process (Humphreys, 1985). Theoretically, dominant coalitions pay greater attention to information from boundary spanners under conditions of environmental turbulence (Emery & Trist, 1965; White & Dozier, 1992).

However, organizations and, particularly, dominant coalitions anticipate and respond to environments of their own creation. Although a material reality does exist beyond the arbitrary boundaries of the organization, meaning attached to representations of that environment is best regarded as an artifact of organizational culture (White & Dozier, 1992). Organizations have cultures with their own implicit, unstated, and frequently invisible presuppositions about the organization itself, its environment, and the connection between the two. Like a tourist visiting another nation and culture, the boundary spanner has opportunities to see the organization from the outside and can develop sensitivities to how others regard the organization.

From the power-control perspective (see chap. 5 and L. Grunig, 1992), representations of organizational environments become chips in the game of organizational politics. When dominant coalitions make strategic decisions, they use representations of organizational environments as part of a complicated drama, "which involves power, influence, negotiation, game playing, organizational politics, complex social relationships with real people, not merely office holders" (Eden & Sims, 1979, p. 120).

With specific regard to public relations, Broom (1986; Broom & Dozier, 1990) suggested that organizations could be viewed along an open-closed systems continuum. In a closed-system organization, public relations planning and decision making follow a historicist causal model; what communicators implement during the current budget cycle is driven substantially by what they implemented last year, modified by whims of powerful people inside the organization. In an open-systems organization, representations of the organizational environment are constantly updated through feedback loops, information flowing into the organization about how constituencies in the environment are responding to organizational behaviors and to issues important to the organization.

Perceived complexity and turbulence in the organizational environment ought to increase manager role enactment among top communicators because dominant coalitions sense an increased need for information from boundary spanners, in order to make decisions that *satisfice*—the term used to describe a decision that is good enough although not necessarily the best possible decision. Vari and Vecsenyi (1984) described five distinct roles in management decision making: decision makers, proposers, experts, consultants, and facilitators. White and Dozier (1992) suggested that communicators play their most important role when they serve as consultants who advise on methods of problem representation:

As generalists, (communication) practitioners must strive to provide fuller representations of the environment to decision makers. Communication managers are uniquely positioned to ensure that decision makers have adequate (rather than idiosyncratic) language/code systems and appropriate (rather than local) conceptual frameworks for representing the decision problem in a form that permits a solution that satisfies. (p. 105)

At the same time, communicators find it difficult to resolve conflicts with publics when they could have been avoided through more informed decision making. The practitioners' lament is often that they are not included in decision making but are asked to repair the damage once it "hits the fan."

D. J. Johnson and Acharya (1982) and Acharya (1983) identified 16 attributes of organizational environments and then asked a systematic sample of 229

PRSA members to evaluate each element with regard to complexity and ability to generate the following typology: nonthreatening/static, nonthreatening/dynamic, threatening/static, and threatening/dynamic. Technician role enactment was predominant in organizations with nonthreatening/static environments only. Components of manager role enactment (especially the expert prescription and problem-solving process facilitation aspects of that role) were especially pronounced in environments that communicators described as both dynamic and threatening.

In a related manner, Lauzen and Dozier (1992) found that manager role enactment increased among corporate communicators studied as a function of environmental pressure and instability. In 1989, Lauzen (1991, 1992) conducted a survey of 168 communicators systematically sampled from O'Dwyer's *Directory of Corporate Communications*. Lauzen adapted Duncan's (1972) 10-item index to measure how important communicators regarded a list of strategic publics. The number or range of publics regarded as important to the organization was taken as an operational indicator of environmental pressure on the organization. Lauzen also adapted Duncan's scale to measure environmental instability, operationalized as how often the attitudes or behaviors of key publics change. Manager role enactment increased significantly as a function of both the range of publics as salient or exerting pressure ($r = .20, p < .01$) and the perceived instability of their attitudes and behaviors ($r = .16, p < .05$).

Emerging technologies like the Internet permit communication practitioners to play expanded boundary-spanning roles. M. A. Johnson (1997) argued that use of two-way communication technologies like the Internet engenders an audience or public orientation among communicators, rather than an orientation toward the organization's dominant coalition. This becomes a key orientation in helping dominant coalitions construct representations of environments that satisfy.

Roles and Program Research

For public relations practitioners and communication managers to serve as effective boundary spanners, they must act as the eyes and ears of organizations as well as spokespersons. That is, communication practitioners must supplement the traditional crafts of one-way communication (such as organizing press conferences, writing news releases, and producing public relations materials) with competencies that permit them to enact two-way communication. Public relations practitioners have always performed this two-way communication function informally, by talking to media contacts, handling complaints from publics, and the like. However, boundary-spanning communicators can perform a two-way communication function more effectively if they understand and use program research.

Program research is information gathering and analysis conducted (or subcontracted) by communicators to scan the organization's environment and to evaluate the effectiveness of communication programs. Use of program research among communicators has been studied extensively, especially as such program research relates to role enactment (Dozier, 1990). Although informal gathering of information is a natural extension of the knowledge base of the "journalist-in-residence" (Broom & Smith, 1978, 1979), the use of focus groups, representative sampling, survey methodology, and quantitative data analysis are all properly regarded as innovations in public relations and communication management. As a technology cluster, the innovation of public relations research is expected to follow the S-curve of adoption, with a few innovators using program research in the beginning, followed by a midpoint of fairly rapid adoption, and then a slowing of rate of adoption (Rogers, 1983).

Central to excellence in public relations and communication management is the knowledge base to use the two-way models (see chap. 8; see also Dozier with L. Grunig & J. Grunig, 1995), both symmetrical and asymmetrical. Both two-way models rest on the need for communicators to act as eyes and ears for their organizations, keeping the dominant coalition informed as to how strategic publics react to organizations and issues important to them.

Dozier (1984a, 1984b, 1986, 1987, 1988a, 1988b, 1988c) conducted a number of studies of practitioner use of evaluation methods and environmental scanning techniques, which were later summarized (Dozier, 1990). The distinction between scanning research and evaluation research, as originally conceptualized, proved less useful when the behavior of communicators was studied inductively. Using factor analysis, Dozier identified three approaches to program research. The *scientific approach* uses formal research techniques to survey publics and track reactions to the organization, conduct public relations audits, subscribe to public opinion research services, use demographic data for decision making, conduct focus group message tests, and review published public opinion surveys. Implicit in the scientific approach is the knowledge base to make sense of such information. The *mixed approach* consists of some formal techniques (such as content analysis of clip files and quantitative analysis of complaints by phone or letter) blended with seat-of-the-pants techniques (such as attending meetings and conferences and monitoring placements through close media contacts). The *informal approach* consists entirely of essentially informal, oral communication between the communicator and members of key publics. This approach uses phone calls to members of target publics, calling back attendees of special events, conducting long interviews with publics, and talking with field personnel.

No approach is inherently superior, because such choices are driven by many contextual factors. These include time frame, budget, communicator relationships with the dominant coalition, and whether findings are likely to be challenged or not (Broom & Dozier, 1990; Dozier, 1990). However, the approaches

... and in the degree to which a specialized knowledge base is required, with the scientific approach requiring the most specialized knowledge and the informal approach requiring the least. This can be seen in the relative frequency with which the different approaches are used. In Dozier's 1987 study of IABC members (Dozier, 1988c, 1990), the informal approach was used most frequently. On a 7-point scale ranging from never (1) to always (7), the informal approach posted a mean of 4.3, significantly higher than the 4.1 mean for the mixed approach. The scientific approach posted a mean of 2.9 on the same scale, significantly less than both the informal and mixed approaches.

Hon (1998) conducted long interviews with a nonprobability sample of 32 communicators and 10 other executives to determine how public relations programs were evaluated. As in previous research, communicators used a number of evaluation tools, ranging from informal to scientific. As in Dozier's (1988c, 1990) IABC survey in 1987, Hon found little formal research. She concluded, "Only two practitioners described evaluation scenarios that seem pretty close to ideal" (p. 130), with one communicator using research to plan and evaluate communication programs and another reporting that formal evaluation was built into each of the agency's programs.

In Dozier's 1987 survey of IABC members (Dozier, 1988c, 1990), use of the mixed approach was the most highly correlated with enactment of the manager role ($r = .42, N = 200, p < .01$), followed by use of the scientific approach ($r = .28, N = 198, p < .01$) and the informal approach ($r = .19, N = 202, p < .01$). That is, enacting the communication manager role is positively related to using all three approaches to program research. Enacting the communication technician role, on the other hand, is negatively related to using the scientific approach, but not significantly so ($r = -.03, N = 201, p = .36$). Technician role enactment is not significantly related to the informal approach ($r = .04, N = 205, p = .25$). Only the mixed research approach, with its emphasis on seat-of-the-pants and clip-file evaluation, posted a significant correlation with technician role enactment ($r = .12, N = 204, p = .04$).

Regarding evaluation alone, Broom and Dozier's (1986) 6-year panel study of PRSA members in 1979 and 1985 permitted an analysis of evaluation activities in 1985 as a function of change in manager role scores since the 1979 survey. Practitioners who increased their manager role scores from 1979 to 1985 posted higher evaluation scores than did practitioners whose manager role enactment scores remained unchanged or decreased (Dozier, 1990).

Role enactment and program research interact differently for men and women. Based on surveys of communicators in 1985 and 1987, Dozier (1990) argued that program research plays a larger role in career advancement of women than it does for men. For men, manager role enactment is somewhat more important. Dozier argued (1989, 1990) that the use of program research provided female communicators with a mechanism for career advancement.

Roles and the Dominant Coalition

Implicit in the manager-technician dichotomy is an assumption about the communicator's relationship with the dominant coalition. Concern about management participation is closely tied to normative definitions of public relations as an emerging profession. Arguably, public relations is a management function that is effective only when top communicators have access to management and strategic decision making, either as formal members of dominant coalitions or as informal advisers privy to such decision making on a regular basis (see J. Grunig, 1992a).

Broom (1982) used a 5-point, five-item index to operationalize the concept of participation in management decision making. Communicators were asked how often they participated in decisions on adopting new policies, meetings with management to discuss major problems, meetings regarding the adoption of new programs or procedures (or both), meetings to evaluate and discuss the results of new programs, and meetings on how to implement new programs. The index had a Cronbach's alpha of .92 in the 1979, 1985, and 1991 surveys.

As expected, enactment of the manager role is significantly and positively correlated with participation in management decision making. Dozier and Broom (1995) confirmed the relationship in the 1979, 1985, and 1991 surveys. In 1979, the Pearson correlation coefficient between manager role enactment and decision-making participation was .66 ($N = 438, p < .001$). In the 1985 follow-up survey of the same respondents, the correlation was .65 ($N = 208, p < .001$). In the 1991 survey, the correlation between manager role enactment and decision-making participation was .66 ($N = 197, p < .001$).

In a 1995 national survey of communicators working for hospitals, Gordon and Kelly (1999) found strong relationships between reported manager role competencies in the communication department, departmental expertise to participate in strategic planning with the dominant coalition, and the overall effectiveness of the hospital. They used four indicators of hospital effectiveness: meeting its budget, reaching short-term goals in the strategic plan, making progress or reaching long-term goals, and advancing the hospital's mission. Overall hospital effectiveness was strongly related to manager role competencies in the communication department ($r = .65, p < .01$) and departmental competencies to participate in strategic planning ($r = .64, p < .01$).

Enactment of the communication technician role, on the other hand, is not associated with participation in management decision making. In Broom's (1982) survey of PRSA members in 1979, technician role enactment was not significantly related to participation in management decision making ($r = .07, N = 438, p = .16$). When the components of the index were tested separately, only participation in meetings on how to implement programs was significantly correlated with participation ($r = .15, N = 439, p < .01$). In a retest of the same rela-

relationships with a subset of the same respondents in 1985, the overall correlation was not significant ($r = .06$, $N = 208$, $p = .37$). When the components of the index were tested separately, none of the relationships was statistically significant. In 1991, the relationship was tested again with the same results. No significant relationship was found between technician role enactment and participation in management decision making ($r = .07$, $N = 202$, $p = .33$). When tested individually, none of the components of the index was correlated with technician role enactment.

Issues Management. Issues management is one area in which communicators typically work with dominant coalitions and participate in decision making. Issues management is the "proactive process of anticipating, identifying, evaluating, and responding to public policy issues that affect organizations and their publics" (Cutlip, Center, & Bröom, 1994, p. 16). Numerous scholars and practitioners have examined issues management in the context of public relations (Cable & Vibbert, 1985; Dyer, 1996; Gaunt & Ollenberger, 1995; Hainsworth & Meng, 1988; Heath, 1998; Heath & Cousino, 1990; Heath & Nelson, 1986; Jones & Chase, 1979; Lauzen, 1994, 1997; Trumbo, 1995). Of particular relevance to manager role enactment is Lauzen and Dozier's (1994) study of 182 senior-level communicators sampled from the 1991 O'Dwyer *Directory of Corporate Communications*. Lauzen introduced the concept of outer-directed issues management practices, defined as an orientation toward the organizational environment that is symmetrical, open, and proactive, using information from the environment in an instrumental (rather than symbolic) way to align and adapt to the environment. Using a measure of outer-directed issues management practices, Lauzen and Dozier tested a model that posited that perceived environmental complexity and turbulence would cause the dominant coalition to seek greater manager role enactment and decision-making participation from their top communicators. Such demand, however, is mediated by the degree to which the organizational culture is participative and the issues management system is outer-directed. In testing their model, Lauzen and Dozier found that perceived environmental complexity was positively correlated with participative culture ($r = .36$, $p < .01$) and outer-directed issues management practices ($r = .45$, $p < .01$). Communicator participation in management decision making was also positively correlated with participative organizational culture ($r = .44$, $p < .01$) and outer-directed issues management practices ($r = .52$, $p < .01$). Participation in decision making was strongly correlated with manager role enactment ($r = .52$). However, manager role enactment and decision-making participation were not related to environmental complexity, once the influence of participative culture and outer-directed issues management practices were controlled.

Encroachment. Manager role enactment and participation in management decision making are related to the concept of encroachment. Encroachment is the assignment of nonpublic relations professionals to manage the public relations function (Dozier, 1988a; Lesly, 1981). In 1989, Lauzen (1991, 1992) conducted a survey of 168 communicators systematically sampled from O'Dwyer's *Directory of Corporate Communications*. Her study used the concept of *marketing imperialism* to hypothesize that less powerful communication departments would experience imperialism from several other departments, in addition to marketing (Lauzen, 1991).

Lauzen developed a model predicting reduced encroachment as a function of manager role enactment and *powerful public relations schema*. She adapted powerful schema from J. Grunig and White (1991), who conceptualized communicators' schema as abstract knowledge structures used to organize knowledge and behavior regarding the communication function in organizations. Such schema may be powerful if communicators see themselves as nonsubstitutable; no other individuals or units in the organization can adequately perform the public relations and communication management function.

Lauzen argued such schema are based on formal training and specialized expertise. She (1991) found that manager role enactment and powerful schema both contributed to reducing encroachment into the public relations domain by other departments in the organizations studied. In a 1990 study of 262 communicators also systematically sampled from O'Dwyer's *Directory of Corporate Communications*, Lauzen (1993; Lauzen & Dozier, 1992) found that manager role enactment by the top communicators played a key role in reducing encroachment by the organization's marketing department into the management of areas (e.g., public affairs, employee communication, and media relations) traditionally regarded as in the public relations domain.

Kelly (1993) studied encroachment among communicators who work for fund-raising organizations. She conducted telephone interviews with a purposive sample of 19 communicators in organizations that included educational institutions, human service organizations, health organizations, and organizations devoted to the arts, culture, and humanities. Based on her research, Kelly adapted Lauzen's model that linked encroachment to manager role enactment of the top communicator. Role enactment was driven by communicator aspirations and competencies, the role sent by the dominant coalition, and the perception of public relations as a primary or secondary function in the organization. In addition, she posited that environmental turbulence and dependency on fund-raising contributed to encroachment.

Gender and Management Decision Making. Women communicators participate significantly less in management decision making than do their male colleagues. This finding was confirmed in the 1979 survey of PRSA members

(Broom, 1982), the 1995 follow-up with a subsample of the same respondents (Broom & Dozier, 1986), and the survey of PRSA and IABC members in 1991 (Dozier & Broom, 1995). In all three surveys, however, these differences disappeared when the influence of manager role enactment was controlled. Logically, the path to greater participation in management decision making is through communication manager role enactment.

One strategy for women pursuing career advancement is to develop mentoring relationships with other, senior members of the organization. The literature suggests that advancement in organizations often occurs when a senior member of the organization treats an entry-employee as an *informal assistant*, teaching the junior colleague the ropes and thus helping the new employee learn how things get done in the organization. Mentoring, then, provides one mechanism for career advancement.

However, a study of 190 practitioners sampled from the IABC and PRSA directories indicated no direct relationship between the protégé's management participation and decision making, on the one hand, and quality of mentoring on the other (Tam, Dozier, Lauzen, & Real, 1995). Key to deconstructing the findings was an examination of the gender attributes of mentor-protégé pairings. Better mentoring (measured as giving advice, providing information, and demonstrating concern about the protégé's advancement) is provided in same-gender pairs (e.g., female-female), when compared to cross-gender pairs (e.g., male-female).

Among the four possible combinations of gender pairings, female mentors provided the highest quality of mentoring to female protégés. However, with regard to manager role enactment, protégés in female-female pairings posted the lowest career advancement scores. Strength of the relationship was reduced when age of protégés was controlled (Tam et al., 1995). The authors theorized that mentoring was superior in same-gender pairings and especially from female mentors; management role enactment of the mentor is positively related to how helpful a mentor can be in a protégé's career advancement: "Regardless of their gender, practitioners with male superiors had more chances to enact the manager role. Technician role enactment, on the other hand, is more influenced by the subordinate's gender. Female subordinates tend to enact the technician role with significantly greater frequency than male subordinates, regardless of their supervisors' gender" (p. 269). Management role enactment of superiors, then, can either enhance or limit the career advancement opportunities of all their subordinates, when advancement is defined as management role enactment and participation in management decision making.

Role Enactment and Income

A sensitive area of scholarship in public relations and communication management is the link between manager role enactment and income. In the published research on role enactment and income, the empirical findings are largely irre-

futable. Communicators playing the manager role predominantly earn higher salaries than practitioners playing the technician role predominantly. For instance, in the 1979 survey of PRSA members, communicators playing the manager role predominantly earned \$39,364 annually, compared to \$24,406 for technicians (Broom, 1982). That is, technicians earned 62% of what managers earned in 1979. In the 1985 follow-up with a subsample of the same communicators, managers earned \$61,753. Those enacting the technician role predominantly earned \$40,564, or 66% of what managers earned (Broom & Dozier, 1986). In a 1991 survey of PRSA and IABC members, communicators enacting the manager role predominantly earned \$67,803. Technicians, on the other hand, earned \$44,932 annually, or again 66% of what managers earned that year (Dozier & Broom, 1995).

The empirical evidence is definitive that salary differences in the incomes of managers and technicians are not due to differences in professional experience. For example, in the 1979 survey of PRSA members, the adjusted income of those enacting the manager role predominantly (after controlling for the influence of years of professional experience in public relations) equaled \$37,300. The adjusted income for technicians in 1979 was \$28,740, or 77% of what managers with equal experience were earning (Broom, 1982). In the 1985 follow-up, the adjusted income of those enacting the manager role predominantly was \$61,120. Among technicians in the 1985 follow-up survey, adjusted income was \$42,210, or 69% of what managers with equivalent professional experience were earning (Broom & Dozier, 1986). In the 1991 survey of PRSA and IABC members, the adjusted income of those enacting the manager role predominantly equaled \$62,710. Among technicians in the 1991 survey, the adjusted income was \$51,560, or 82% of what managers with equal professional experience were making. In all three studies, professional experience was a significant predictor of manager role enactment and also a significant predictor of income. However, in those three studies, manager role enactment remained a significant predictor of income, even after communicators had been equalized in terms of professional experience.

Role enactment and income are related in complex ways. Dozier and Broom (1995) proposed a model that attempted to integrate prior theorizing and research findings and then tested it on two independent samples of PRSA members collected 12 years apart. Enactment of the manager role predominantly was placed at the center. The model posited gender as antecedent to all other variables in the model. Men were hypothesized to have more years of professional experience and to have been employed by their current employer (tenure) for a longer period of time. Overall professional experience and tenure were hypothesized to contribute positively to manager role enactment.

Dozier and Broom (1995) also theorized that gender discrimination contributed to higher incidences of men enacting the manager role predominantly, after removing the effects of professional experience and tenure. Enacting the

manager role predominantly was posited as positively correlated with participation in management decision making. Such participation was, in turn, hypothesized as positively correlated with income. Additional variance in income was hypothesized between men and women, once participation in decision making and manager role enactment were removed.

Using 440 completed questionnaires from the 1979 survey, the model just described was confirmed. However, using 203 completed questionnaires from the 1991 survey, the residual variance between gender and enacting the manager role predominantly had declined dramatically, with the beta coefficient dropping from .19 in 1979 to .08 in 1991. That is, men in the 1991 survey were more likely to enact the manager role predominantly; but men having more professional experience and tenure substantially accounted for such enactment. In addition, the residual variance between gender and income also declined dramatically, from a beta weight of .25 in 1979 to a beta weight of .03 in 1991. That is, men earned higher incomes than women in 1991; but that income difference was substantially accounted for by the intervening variables of professional experience, manager role enactment, and participation in decision making.

Dozier and Broom (1995) were quick to point out that their findings were tentative, due in part to a smaller sample size in the 1991 survey. However, the findings do show some progress in reducing the more blatant forms of gender discrimination with regard to role enactment and income. More germane to the issue at hand, enactment of the manager role predominantly serves as a key intervening variable in explaining income differences between men and women.

Roles and New Technology

New communication technologies are transforming mediated communication in the 21st century, placing demands on public relations practitioners and communication managers to adopt such technologies. Role enactment provides a useful theoretical framework for thinking about communication and technology. Dozier (1989) argued that new technologies can be divided into those that enhance what communicators already do and those that allow the communicator "to do something completely new and different, to play a different role in the organization" (p. 4). He asserted that every technological innovation should be evaluated with regard to its role appropriateness. Technologies, which were innovative at the time, included desktop publishing and internal e-mail distribution lists; these technologies enhance enactment of the technician role. Other innovations, like statistical application software for personal computers, enhance the enactment of the manager role, because such applications "provide a tool for analyzing data collected by scanning the environment and detecting public relations problems or opportunities" (p. 5). Technologies that help disseminate messages enhance technician role enactment; technologies that help solve strategic problems enhance manager role enactment.

Anderson and Reagan (1992) conducted a survey of public relations practitioners in the state of Washington to assess the relationship between role enactment and use of new technologies. They computed correlations between manager and technician role enactment and 20 technologies previously identified as relevant to public relations (Druck, Fiur, & Bates, 1986). Findings indicate that managers and technicians use different technologies and in different ways. Manager role enactment was significantly correlated with the use of technology for strategic planning purposes such as public affairs policy planning, issues management, media monitoring, market and demographic planning, and budgeting. Technician role enactment was not correlated with these applications.

In a series of case studies with 17 communicators in 12 American corporations, Thomsen (1995) found evidence of further relevance of new technology to manager role enactment. Through a semistructured interview protocol, Thomsen found communicators using commercial online databases to participate in environmental scanning, allowing managers to identify emerging issues earlier in the issue cycle, and helping their organizations become more proactive in their responses.

M. A. Johnson (1997) conducted a qualitative study of 17 communicators in an American city in the Southeast, permitting in-depth exploration of uses of new communication technologies. Her findings suggested that the availability of online research services through the Internet could accelerate the adoption of research tools advocated in the professional literature (e.g., Broom & Dozier, 1990).

Satisfaction and the Subjectivity of Role Enactment

Enormous normative value is placed on the importance of manager role enactment in the professional literature (Cutlip et al., 1994; J. Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Manager role enactment permits the communication department to counsel decision makers in dominant coalitions, in order to practice the two-way symmetrical model (see chap. 8 and Dozier et al., 1995). One might expect that manager role enactment would be positively correlated with job satisfaction among communicators.

In their 1991 survey of PRSA members, however, Dozier and Broom (1995) found that enacting the manager role predominantly was not significantly correlated with job satisfaction, once the influence of decision-making participation was removed (beta = .03). They found a higher beta weight (beta = .11) when they conducted a similar analysis from a comparable survey of PRSA members in 1979, but the residual correlation was small compared with the direct contribution of decision-making participation on job satisfaction (beta = .48).

In analyzing data from a panel study of 206 PRSA members from 1979 to 1985, Broom and Dozier (1986) found that practitioners who enacted the man-

ager role predominantly in 1979 posted higher job satisfaction scores than did practitioners enacting the technician role predominantly. However, 6 years later, job satisfaction among managers had declined and satisfaction among technicians had increased; managers and technicians did not differ significantly with regard to job satisfaction in the 1985 survey. Using dominant role enactment from the 1979 and 1985 data, Broom and Dozier developed a four-way typology of career paths: technician-to-manager, technician-to-technician, manager-to-technician, and manager-to-manager. They then analyzed change in job satisfaction for each career path. Technicians who stayed in the technical role increased most on the job satisfaction index, up .53 on a 5-point scale. Technicians who became managers over the 6 years posted an increase of .23, less than half the gain of technicians who remained technicians. Job satisfaction among managers who stayed in that role for the 6 years dropped slightly (Broom & Dozier, 1986).

Some evidence (Broom & Dozier, 1986; Dozier & Broom, 1995) suggests that if communicators could participate in management decision making, they would otherwise prefer to enact the technician role. For example, McGoon (1993) reported the results of an informal fax poll conducted by *Communication World*. Most of the 170 communicators responding indicated that they preferred writing, editing, producing publications, and other activities of technical role enactment. Only 18 of the 170 said they liked managing the activities in the public relations or communication department. Four of the 170 said they liked working with top management as their preferred work activity. When asked what they would like to be doing in 10 years, responses included: "writer collecting royalties on a runaway best-seller children's book," "living in Italy writing books," "on a beach," "owning my own greenhouse," and "in France working as an English professor." Zoch et al. (1997) surveyed communicators for all 91 school districts in South Carolina and found that creativity, which generally is associated with the technician role, was one of five factors rated higher than salary in contributing to communicator job satisfaction.

A more systematic analysis of the subjective dimensions of role enactment was conducted by Dozier and Gottesman (1982) of communicators in the San Diego area. Using Q-methodology (Broom & Dozier, 1990; McKeown & Thomas, 1988) in conjunction with large-sample survey methods, Dozier and Gottesman relied on intensive data collection from a few respondents to construct models of communicator belief systems about their roles and their work. They found one belief system highly correlated with enactment of the technician role in the survey portion of the study. Labeled *creative artistic practitioners*, communicators highly loaded on this factor indicated that they preferred the spontaneous, intuitive, and creative aspects of their work.

If the creative artistic practitioner seeks opportunities to enact activities defining the technician role, the Q-study sheds light on Broom and Dozier's (1986) finding from their panel study that technicians who remained technicians over

the 6-year period posted the largest increase in job satisfaction. Dozier and Gottesman (1982) reported that although creative artistic practitioners said they served in top- and middle-management positions, as well as staff positions, they seemed to avoid activities associated with manager role enactment. Creative artistic practitioners, Dozier and Gottesman reported, wanted "more say in organizational decisions" but remained "distrustful of changes implied by climbing the organizational ladder to decision-making levels" (p. 26). This finding helps explain Dozier and Broom's (1995) finding from the 1991 survey of PRSA members that manager role enactment is not correlated with job satisfaction, once participation in decision making is controlled.

As noted by Creedon (1991), the manager-technician dichotomy is problematic for a number of reasons. With regard to the creative activities associated with technician role enactment, she cited Parsons' finding that college students majoring in public relations who were surveyed at four American universities expressed little ambition to do creative work. P. R. Parsons (1989) found that "One of the most dramatic and surprising findings of the study was the degree to which public relations students disliked all the proffered forms of creative work" (p. 165). Whether emphasis on manager role enactment plays a role in the way college students select their majors is unclear. However, emphasis on manager role enactment in public relations textbooks (e.g., Cutlip et al., 1994; J. Grunig & Hunt, 1984) may influence future communicators to regard manager role enactment as "preferable" (Creedon, 1991, p. 76).

Despite such notable research on communicator job satisfaction as the 1990 and 1995 PRSA studies (Serini, Toth, Wright, & Emig, 1997), the interface of role enactment, job satisfaction, and communicator belief systems has not been adequately investigated. Indeed, the normative demands for manager role enactment are at least paradoxical, given what working communicators report about their job satisfaction, their ambitions, and belief systems about their work. As discussed later, some of the paradox is caused by a certain slipperiness in past roles research with regard to whether the individual communicator or the communication department served as the unit of analysis.

Use of Role Measures Outside the United States

Most roles research has been conducted in the United States (Acharya, 1983; Broom, 1982; Broom & Dozier, 1985, 1986; Broom & Smith, 1978, 1979; Dozier, 1981, 1983, 1984a, 1984c, 1986, 1987, 1988c, 1989, 1990; Dozier & Broom, 1995; Dozier & Gottesman, 1982; D. J. Johnson & Acharya, 1982; Lauzen, 1991, 1992; Lauzen & Dozier, 1992; Sullivan, Dozier, & Hellweg, 1984, 1985). However, before the Excellence study, some roles research had been conducted outside the United States.

Piekos and Einsiedel (1990) explored the relationship between role enactment and evaluation methods among Canadian communicators using member-

ship lists of the Canadian Public Relations Society (CPRS) and the International Association of Business Communicators. They received 309 questionnaires by mail. As in earlier U.S. studies, Piekos and Einsiedel found that components of the manager role (expert prescriber, problem-solving process facilitator, and communication facilitator) correlated positively and significantly with evaluation methods, both scientific and intuitive. However, technician role scores also correlated with both scientific and intuitive evaluation research. They speculated that greater specialization and larger communication departments in the United States might account for the difference. In Canada, a large number of department heads enact the technician role predominantly.

Later, Coombs, Holladay, Hasenauer, and Signitzer (1994) conducted a comparative analysis by surveying communication professionals in Austria, Norway, and the United States. After dichotomizing respondents as either managers or technicians using an eight-item subset of Broom's role measures, they found that practitioners played the manager role predominantly in Austria (75%) and the United States (70%), whereas a minority of Norwegian communicators (41%) enacted the manager role predominantly. Coombs and his colleagues cited differences in educational systems as contributing to this difference.

The factor structure of role items appeared very robust in a 1994 survey of 127 communicators and public relations practitioners in Bangkok, Thailand (Ekachai, 1995). Ekachai subjected the 24 items to exploratory factor analysis, which would permit the greatest opportunity for the Thai factor analysis to deviate from factor analysis conducted on U.S. samples. In the Thai factor analysis, 10 items loaded heavily on the first factor, which Ekachai interpreted as the manager role factor. Nine of the 10 items on her manager role factor also loaded heavily on the Dozier and Broom (1995) manager factor found for American communicators in 1979 and 1991. (Dozier and Broom used confirmatory factor analysis, which forced a two-factor solution, based on earlier research demonstrating the utility of that dichotomy.)

Ekachai (1995) found that technician role activities, as isolated in the 1979 and 1991 surveys of U.S. communicators (Dozier & Broom, 1995), were split across two factors in the Thai sample. She interpreted these as a media relations specialist factor and a graphic technician factor; all six items from Ekachai's media relations specialist and graphics technician factors were the items that also loaded on Dozier and Broom's technician factor. In addition, Ekachai reported a separate factor for enactment of the communication liaison role, which likely would have merged with the manager factor, had confirmatory factor analysis (specifying a two-factor solution) been employed.

Different Role Measurement Strategies

Much of the roles research in public relations and communication management has used Broom's 24-item set (Dozier & Broom, 1995) or a subset of it, combining items to form indexes of the four conceptual roles postulated by Broom

(Broom, 1982; Broom & Smith, 1979), the two-role dichotomy proposed by Dozier (1983), or both. However, several researchers have used different operationalizations of what practitioners do and the roles they play in organizations.

Ferguson (1979) constructed a universe of practitioner activities by combing the public relations literature and survey data from communicators. After eliminating duplications, she reduced the measures to a set of 45 items. Ferguson focused on identifying the role norms of communicators by asking "how appropriate or proper" each activity was for those participating in the survey (p. 3). After Katz and Kahn (1978), such activities might be described as the role received and the expectations of the office as understood by the communicator (not actual role behaviors enacted). Ferguson collected data from a national sample of PRSA members and subjected her item set to factor analysis. Eight interpretable factors emerged; two other factors were discarded because too few items loaded on those factors to permit interpretation. Ferguson named her factors as: problem-solver manager, staff manager, researcher, goodwill ambassador, meeting organizer, journalist-technical communicator, public community relations, and personnel-industrial relations.

More recently, Berkowitz and Hristodoulakis (1999) developed a 13-item set of norms or ideals applicable to public relations work, derived from a discussion of activities and functions of public relations in Cutlip et al. (1994). The item set was self-administered to a campus chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America and mailed to a sample of PRSA members in a nearby city in the American Midwest. The resulting data were subjected to cluster analysis, specifying a two-cluster solution. The first cluster was interpreted as a management orientation, with high value placed on counseling management in decision making. The second cluster was interpreted as a technician orientation, with high value placed on being a "people person" and regarding public relations primarily as a creative activity.

Guth (1995) developed a 10-item set that measured the technician role, with some items similar to Broom's technician items (e.g., write news releases and serve as photographer) and others quite different (e.g., take dictation and cannot be fired except for policy violation). Guth also developed a 20-item manager role index. Some items were similar to Broom's expert prescriber (e.g., develop organizational policy), problem-solving process facilitator (e.g., counsel others on public relations concerns), and communication facilitator (e.g., serve as organizational spokesperson). Other items were strikingly different (e.g., serve at the pleasure of the CEO, have private office, and have 4-year college degree).

Wright (1995) conducted intensive observations with 148 executives who were members of the Arthur Page Society, a professional organization of senior-level communicators. He used a one-page questionnaire (returned by fax machine), conversational (long) interviews, and two focus groups at a meeting of the Arthur Page Society to collect data. Based on his research, Wright advocated a "third major role for public relations—communication executive, com-

prised mainly of corporate senior vice presidents who report directly to CEOs' (p. 181).

Morton (1996) triangulated on the manager and technician roles by using a variety of proxy measures associated with different levels of role enactment, as well as a more direct measure of "primary activities" reported by respondents (p. 365). She used years of professional experience, salary, number of others that the respondent supervised, education, and organizational type to discriminate between managers and technicians via these correlates. More directly, respondents were further differentiated by indicating the following as primary activities: writing, developing campaigns, producing publications, supervising others, advising management, and coordinating events.

Leichty and Springston (1996) combined Broom's (1982) 24-item set with 14 additional items they adapted from the organizational boundary-spanning literature. Their questionnaire was completed by 137 members of the Public Relations Council of Alabama. When subjected to exploratory factor analysis, eight factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 emerged. Two factors, however, consisted of only two items, making them somewhat difficult to interpret. Factor 2 consisted of four items associated with the manager role factor (see Dozier & Broom, 1995); none of 14 boundary-spanning items loaded heavily on this factor. Factor 6 consisted of four technician role measures from the Broom set, with no heavy loadings for any of the 14 additional boundary-spanning activities. Factor scores were generated for each respondent for each of the eight factors. Next, factor scores were subjected to a series of cluster analyses. A five-cluster solution was deemed superior to other solutions and interpreted as internals, generalists, externals, traditional managers, and outliers.

Wright, L. Grunig, Springston, and Toth (1991) and Toth, Serini, Wright, and Emig (1998) conducted surveys of PRSA members in 1990 ($N = 1,027$) and in 1995 ($N = 678$). A 17-item role set developed at Boston University was used in each survey, including items the same as (or similar to) Broom's original, four-role typology: expert prescriber (e.g., making communication policy decisions), problem-solving process facilitator (e.g., counseling management), and communication facilitator (e.g., meeting with clients and executives) roles, as well as measures of the communication technician (e.g., writing, editing, and producing messages). Data for women and men were factor analyzed separately for both surveys. The 1990 exploratory factor analysis yielded two factors for both men and women; the two factors closely parallel the manager and technician role factors. In 1995, however, the factors became less distinguishable, with many items posting lower factor loadings than in 1990. Moreover, the exploratory factor analysis revealed a third factor in 1995 that Toth and her colleagues (1998) interpreted as the *agency profile*. Items with high factor loadings included meeting with peers, meeting with clients and executives, evaluating program results, handling correspondence, and making phone calls.

Given the diversity of approaches to measuring practitioner roles, which way is best? The simple answer is: It depends. As noted in a previous review of roles research (Dozier, 1992), roles are abstractions of the myriad activities of communicators in their day-to-day work. As such, conceptualizing and measuring roles is inherently problematic. Roles research in public relations and communication management has used quantitative methods extensively, drawing items from a review of the literature (e.g., hypothetical-deductive approach) to construct a nomothetic model of explanation. These presuppositions are built into much of the roles research in public relations. Within those assumptions, the use of factor analysis or cluster analysis as data reduction tools adds additional wrinkles. In exploratory factor analysis, the number of factors increases as a function of the number of items analyzed. In confirmatory factor analysis and cluster analysis, data reduction is forced. As such, there is no one right number of roles or one right way to measure them.

However, several issues ought to be weighed when selecting role measures. At an operational level, how reliable have role measures proven in past research? Many reports of role studies do not provide reliability coefficients. Using role measures from prior research permits direct comparison of findings from one study to the next.

Perhaps the most important consideration, however, should be the theoretical utility of the measure. How has a particular approach to role measurement contributed to our understanding of public relations? Clearly, Broom's 24-item role set and the manager-technician dichotomy have contributed the lion's share of new understanding about how roles relate to a myriad interesting professional and social issues. At the same time, the evolution of communication as a profession suggests that the original 24-item role set needs constant reinvention through intensive observation of what communicators do. A recommended strategy is to conduct data collection and analysis in parallel, treating new measures as separate from the original item set. In this manner, we may be able to reduce the number of new factors that are "discovered" every time the item set is modified by additional items.

Criticisms of Roles Research

Criticisms of roles research in public relations ranges from the methodological to the ideological. Starting with the narrowest methodological criticism, some have argued (Leichty & Springston, 1996; Toth & L. Grunig, 1993; Toth et al., 1998) that the manager-technician role dichotomy oversimplifies the complexities of role enactment. Corrective strategies have included using Broom's original four-way typology and expanding the number of items (Leichty & Springston, 1996), as well as attending to cross-loadings and factor analyzing women

and men communicators separately (Toth & L. Grunig, 1993; Toth et al., 1998). Culbertson (1991) recommended further research into the process of role received and role taking, rather than focusing exclusively on role enactment.

A broader critique of roles research is embedded in radical and, to some degree, liberal feminist theory. Creedon (1991) provided the first comprehensive critique of roles research from this perspective. Other scholars such as Toth and L. Grunig (1993), Hon (1995), and Toth et al. (1998) have contributed to and provided further elaboration of this critique. This critique has a number of important elements.

First, the gender of researchers and worldviews embedded in their socialization as either men or women affects what research questions they consider important and how they go about studying them. This perspective is not uniquely feminist; rather, it reflects presuppositions that favor intensive observation, idiographic modeling, and reflexivity found in ethnomethodology (Fetterman, 1998; Rossman & Rallis, 1998).

Second, and somewhat as a consequence of the first, men and women studying roles look for different things, find different information in the data, and make sense of what they do find in different ways. Dozier's manager and technician role typology, for example, "homogenized and dichotomized the meaning of work in the field" (Creedon, 1991, p. 78). Creedon argued that women who study roles found liaison and decision-making activities among technicians, activities that male researchers had treated as part of the manager role.

Third, much roles research places greater normative value on the manager role than the technician role, devaluing the work that most women do in public relations. Such preference for the manager role emanates from male socialization to favor hierarchy and categorization, as well as open-systems theory, in which theories of organizational roles are embedded. The feminist critique challenges both justifications for manager role preference.

Fourth, strategies for reducing gender discrimination against women communicators (e.g., Dozier, 1988a) often treat organizational biases as a constant and suggest women change their behaviors (e.g., do more research and enact the manager role) to overcome institutionalized mechanisms of gender discrimination. A radical feminist critique of such liberal incrementalism is that the "victim is blamed" (Creedon, 1991, p. 73) for her condition. In addition, women are urged to enact the manager role within the existing discriminatory structures by "aligning themselves with the masculine stereotype (power and control)" (Hon, 1995, p. 33).

Fifth, liberal incrementalism that underlies much roles research never challenges the patterns of privilege and marginalization inherent in presuppositions of the open-systems model of organizations or the liberal pluralistic model of society as a whole (Hon, L. Grunig, & Dozier, 1992). At core is the manifest unequal distribution of power in organizations and in society. Moreover, according to this critique, the solution to power inequities in organizations and in

society is not simply to redistribute power. As L. Grunig (1992) argued, *empowerment* is a more useful concept, wherein power is shared (a positive-sum game) rather than accumulated or lost (zero-sum game) in a hierarchical manner. Hon (1995) provided a plan for empowering women in public relations by fusing liberal feminist tactics with a radical feminist strategy for changing organizations and social systems.

CONTRIBUTION OF THE EXCELLENCE STUDY TO ROLES RESEARCH

Despite the large body of research in this area (Pasadeos et al., 1999), the Excellence study makes a unique contribution to our understanding of practitioner roles. One difficulty with previous roles research is the blurring of the level of analysis. Typically, data about role enactment have been provided from individual practitioners through cross-sectional surveys. Except for such gross measures as departmental size and reporting relationships, the role of the individual respondent has been examined independently of the context of the communication department. This is especially problematic because manager role enactment involves a wide range of competencies, all of which may not reside in a single individual but may be spread among a number of communicators. Along these lines, the present study systematically analyzed these competencies as separate variables at the departmental (rather than individual) level of analysis. A second difficulty with roles research is a preoccupation with role enactment, without regard to the role sent or the role received. The Excellence study charted new territory by asking top communicators what role they actually enact, as well as the role expectations they have received from the dominant coalition. Finally, the Excellence study asked CEOs (or other top managers of organizations) what they expect from their top communicators, what role their top communicator *should* play.

In each chapter of this book, we have related our original propositions from the theory book that guided the Excellence study to the results of the study. In the theory book, Dozier (1992) reviewed the extensive literature on roles at that time and derived 15 propositions that summarized extant research. This chapter focuses on Dozier's first proposition, that *variance in practitioner role activities can be parsimoniously accounted for through two basic organizational roles: managers and technicians*. Most of the other 14 propositions specify that the managerial role will be associated with other variables included in the Excellence scale or with variables that are, in turn, associated with these characteristics of excellence. These variables are the two-way symmetrical and asymmetrical models, involvement in strategic decision making, environment scanning, program planning and evaluation, openness of management to the environment, and a threatening environment. As a result, we have collapsed Dozier's other 14 prop-

ositions into a single proposition: *The managerial role will be associated with the other characteristics of an excellent public relations function.*

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS RELATED TO ROLES

Results of the Excellence study regarding communicator roles in organizations involve (a) the expertise available in the department to engage in various role enactments, (b) the actual enactment of various role activities by the top communicator in the department, and (c) the expectations of the dominant coalition with regard to role enactment by the top communicator. Each aspect of organizational role is linked to other characteristics of excellence in organizations, as well as with overall Excellence.

Role Expertise in the Department

One area of roles research that has received scant attention in prior studies is expertise to enact various role activities. In the Excellence study, we decided to treat such expertise as an attribute of the communication or public relations department, rather than an attribute of the individual respondent. Earlier research (Broom & Dozier, 1986; Dozier & Broom, 1995) indicated that formal education or training are poor predictors (at best) of role enactment. We therefore decided to construct indexes deductively from previously established measures of communicator role enactment, logically generating a series of tasks requiring specialized departmental expertise consistent with the enactment of communicator roles.

A set of 16 tasks was included in the questionnaire completed by the top communicator or public relations head.¹ Top communicators were asked to use the fractionation scale to describe "the extent to which your department or someone in your department has the expertise or knowledge to perform" these tasks. The tasks, as described in the top-communicator questionnaire, are summarized in Table 6.1. Eight tasks were operationalized as measures of manager role expertise; they appear in rank order at the top of Table 6.1, based on the amount of such expertise in the communication department, as reported by top communicators ($N = 270$). As indicated, the highest level of departmental expertise was reported for developing departmental goals and objectives. This kind of expertise was followed by the expertise to develop strategies to solve public relations problems, prepare departmental budgets, manage organizational responses to issues, and manage people. For these five items, raw means

¹Top communicator and PR head are used interchangeably to designate the senior-ranking communicator in the organization's primary communication department who completed the top communicator questionnaire.

TABLE 6.1
Departmental Expertise to Enact Communicator Roles

Departmental Expertise to Enact Manager Role	Raw Means	Transformed Means
Develop goals & objectives for department	167.5	12.5
Develop strategies to solve PR problems	158.7	12.2
Prepare departmental budget	148.4	11.6
Manage organization's response to issues	146.6	11.0
Manage people	129.9	10.9
Conduct evaluation research	83.7	8.2
Use research to segment publics	80.3	7.7
Perform environmental scanning	64.6	6.1
Mean	123.3	11.1
Pearson Correlation With Overall Excellence		+.60*
Cronbach's Alpha		.83
Departmental Expertise to Enact Technician Role	Raw Means	Transformed Means
Produce publications	167.6	12.3
Write news releases & features	157.0	12.0
Coordinate press conference or event coverage	149.4	11.7
Write speeches	124.6	10.3
Produce audiovisual materials	122.7	10.1
Write an advertisement	97.1	8.6
Take photos	91.2	8.3
Create & manage a speakers' bureau	79.6	7.3
Mean	123.3	11.1
Pearson Correlation With Overall Excellence		+.42**
Cronbach's Alpha		.80

* $p < .001$, with manager role department expertise removed from Excellence scale. ** $p < .001$.

and transformed means (mean of the square roots of the raw scores on each measure) are all above 100 and 10, respectively. This means that all are above what top communicators regard as an average response for all items in the questionnaire.

The next three items involved specialized expertise that few communication departments have in abundance. These include the expertise to conduct evaluation research, to use research to segment publics, and to perform environmental scanning. Each of these items has a mean that is below average, compared to the other measures of expertise. Naturally, scores on the manager role expertise index (created by computing the average of all eight transformed items) are highly correlated with overall Excellence scores (see chap. 3). The manager role expertise index has a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of .83, meaning that it is a reliable measure for purposes of testing relationships with other variables.

Eight items were operationalized from technician role enactment measures used in previous research. Top communicators were asked to assess the depart-

ment's expertise to conduct eight tasks associated with technician role enactment. These items from the top-communicator questionnaire also are summarized in Table 6.1. The highest level was reported for producing publications followed by expertise to write news releases and features, coordinate press conferences or coverage of events, write speeches, and produce audiovisual materials. On average, top communicators reported higher-than-average expertise to perform these tasks.

On the other hand, top communicators reported below-average expertise in their departments to write an advertisement, take photos, and create and manage a speakers' bureau. These items posted means below 100 and 10, respectively, for the raw and transformed scores. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for the technician role expertise scale (mean of all eight transformed technician role expertise items) is .80, meaning that it is sufficiently reliable for testing relationships with other variables.

To better understand the underlying structure of the role expertise items, separate factor analyses were conducted on the manager expertise items and the technician expertise items. Because this item set had never been used in previous studies, exploratory factor analysis (principal component factor extraction rotated to a varimax solution; cross-loadings below .20 not reported) was employed (see Table 6.2). The manager item set represents two empirical and conceptually distinct aspects of manager expertise. One form of manager expertise can be interpreted as *administrative manager* expertise (Factor 1). Items for the administrative manager expertise factor are organized in descending order by factor loadings, with items most central to the underlying construct at the top of the list. This ranking by factor centrality closely parallels the ranking by the amount of role expertise in the department, reported in Table 6.1. Factor 2 can be interpreted as *strategic manager* expertise. Whereas administrative expertise involves the day-to-day operations of a well-run department (regardless of the four public relations model used), strategic expertise is closely tied to a set of strategic tools a communication department needs to use the two-way models (both symmetrical and asymmetrical) and contribute to the organization's strategic planning process.

Technician role expertise is also made up of two empirically and conceptually distinct components (see Table 6.2). The first factor can be interpreted as *internal technician* expertise. This expertise involves the technical production of photos, advertisements, audiovisual materials, publications, and running a speakers' bureau. The second factor can be interpreted as *media relations* expertise. This involves such competencies as coordinating a press conference or media coverage of an event, writing news releases and features, and writing speeches. Taken together, these items denote the cluster of competencies needed for maintaining good relations with the media whereas items denoting internal technician expertise are largely preoccupied with production, without regard to distribution or publics (e.g., the media).

TABLE 6.2
Factor Analysis of Manager and Technician Role Expertise
in the Communication Department

	Factor Loadings	
	Administrative Manager (F1)	Strategic Manager (F2)
<i>Components of Manager Role Expertise</i>		
Develop goals & objectives for department	.89	
Prepare departmental budget	.82	
Develop strategies to solve PR problems	.81	.26
Manage organization's response to issues	.74	
Manage people	.63	.30
Conduct evaluation research		.86
Use research to segment publics	.30	.79
Perform environmental scanning	.28	.61
	Factor Loadings	
	Internal Technician (F1)	Media Relations (F2)
<i>Components of Technician Role Expertise</i>		
Take photos	.84	
Write an advertisement	.71	
Produce audiovisual materials	.68	.38
Create & manage a speakers' bureau	.54	.28
Produce publications	.51	.48
Coordinate press conference or event coverage		.83
Write news releases & features	.27	.80
Write speeches		.67

Note. Principal components extraction with all factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 rotated to the varimax solution displayed herein.

The manager and technician role expertise indexes displayed in Table 6.1 were used intact for further analysis, recognizing that both indexes have meaningful subcomponents.² Table 6.3 displays relations between manager role expertise and technician role expertise with each of the characteristics of excellence. Regarding manager role expertise, we expected and found strong correlations with other departmental competencies to use the two-way models of public relations, both symmetrical ($r = .72, p < .01$) and asymmetrical ($r = .72, p < .01$). We also expected and found strong correlations for the value ($r = .31, p < .01$) and support ($r = .29, p < .01$) provided to the communication department

²Separate correlations were calculated for the combined variables in the strategic manager and administrative manager factors with the overall index of excellence (with the managerial expertise variable removed). Both correlations were high and roughly the same (.49 for the strategic expertise and .54 for administrative expertise), which suggests that excellent public relations departments need both types of managerial expertise.

TABLE 6.3
Correlations of Manager and Technician Role Expertise
in Department With Other Characteristics of Excellence

Other Characteristics of Excellence	Manager Role Expertise	Technician Role Expertise
Expertise to Use Two-Way Symmetrical Model ^a	.72**	.46**
Expertise to Use Two-Way Asymmetrical Model ^a	.72**	.43**
Value Dominant Coalition Places on PR ^a	.31**	.20*
Support Dominant Coalition Gives to PR ^a	.29**	.11
PR's Contribution to Strategic Planning ^a	.35**	.22*
Manager Role Enactment by PR Head ^a	.57**	.34**
Senior Adviser Role Enactment by PR Head ^a	.47**	.31**
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Symmetrical Model Used ^a	.38**	.20*
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Asymmetrical Model Used ^a	.42**	.19*
Support for Women Employees ^a	.31**	.11
Support Dominant Coalition Gives to PR ^b	.13*	.02
Value Dominant Coalition Places on PR ^b	.07	.02
Importance of Knowledge/Communication With Outside Groups ^b	.13*	.17**
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Asymmetrical Model Used ^b	.18**	.11*
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Symmetrical Model Used ^b	.09	.04
Dominant Coalition Expects PR Head to Enact Manager Role ^b	.13*	.08
Dominant Coalition Expects PR Head to Enact Senior Adviser Role ^b	.10*	.11
PR's Contribution to Strategic Planning ^b	.10*	.05
Participative Organizational Culture ^c	.14**	.07
Overall Excellence Score	.60**	.41**

^aFrom PR head (top-communicator) questionnaire. ^bFrom CEO questionnaire. ^cFrom employee questionnaire (data aggregated for all employees in the organization surveyed).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

by the organization's dominant coalition, as reported by the top communicator. The CEOs reported a weaker but significant correlation between manager role expertise and support given to the communication department by the dominant coalition ($r = .13, p < .05$) but not for value ($r = .07, p > .05$). Top communicators reported that manager role expertise in their departments was strongly correlated with communication's contribution to strategic planning in the organization ($r = .35, p < .01$).

According to top communicators, department expertise to enact the manager role is strongly correlated with the actual enactment of the manager role ($r = .57, p < .01$) and a variation on manager role enactment called "senior adviser role enactment" ($r = .47, p < .01$) by top communicators. Likewise, CEOs reported that their dominant coalitions expect higher levels of manager ($r = .13, p < .05$) and senior adviser ($r = .10, p < .05$) role enactment from their top communicators in organizations with communication departments with higher levels of manager role expertise. In organizations with higher departmental manager expertise, expectations that communicators use the two-way models of public

relations, both symmetrical and asymmetrical, are significantly higher. These higher expectations were reported by both top communicators and CEOs (see Table 6.3). In addition, manager role expertise is positively correlated with the importance that CEOs place on communication and knowledge regarding external publics ($r = .13, p < .05$). Manager role expertise is also positively correlated with two aspects of organizational culture: organizational support for female employees ($r = .31, p < .01$) as reported by top communicators and the overall participative nature of the culture ($r = .14, p < .01$) as reported by a sample of regular employees. As expected, the correlation of manager role expertise (with manager expertise removed from the Excellence scale to prevent autocorrelation) with the overall Excellence score is .60 ($p < .01$), accounting for over a third of the variance in the 20-item Excellence factor.

More intriguing and less expected was the strong correlation of technician role expertise with many characteristics of excellence. Previous research suggests that technical role enactment is unrelated to indicators of excellence, such as participation in management decision making and strategic planning. However, as indicated in Table 6.3, top communicators reported that their departments' technician expertise is positively correlated with expertise to use the two-way models of public relations, the value and support given the communication department by the dominant coalitions, communication's contribution to strategic planning, and actual enactment of both the manager and technician roles by the top communicator. Relationships between technician role expertise and variables provided by CEOs, however, are generally weak and insignificant. Nevertheless, CEOs did report significant, positive correlations between technician role expertise and the importance they place on communication with outside publics ($r = .17, p < .01$) and dominant coalition expectations that the two-way asymmetrical model be used ($r = .11, p < .05$). The correlation between technician role expertise and overall Excellence scores is .41 ($p < .01$).

As detailed in the qualitative section of this chapter and elsewhere (Dozier with L. Grunig & J. Grunig, 1995), the seeming importance of technician role expertise to excellence can be understood only through the symbiosis of both manager and technician competencies within the same excellent department. When excellent communication departments are examined over time, problems or opportunities (such as a crisis, merger, or change in CEOs or dominant coalitions) occur that provide communicators a chance to deliver excellent work. This alters the dominant coalition's expectations of the communication department, leading the coalition to demand such communication excellence in the future. This demand-delivery loop (Dozier with L. Grunig & J. Grunig, 1995) provides excellent communication departments with the power to demand scarce resources (e.g. staff and budget). However, excellent communication programs depend on excellent execution, meaning that communication departments need the traditional craft skills embodied in departmental technician

expertise. In this framework, departmental expertise to enact the technical role is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for excellence.

Empirically, this symbiosis between manager and technician role expertise in the department is shown in the strong, positive correlation between manager role expertise and technician role expertise ($r = .57, p < .01$). Table 6.4 displays the relationships between technician role expertise and other characteristics of excellence, after controlling for the influence of manager role expertise. Ten of the 21 relationships in Table 6.4 are negative, although none of these is statistically significant. Only three relationships in Table 6.4 are statistically significant. Expertise to use the two-way asymmetrical model posts a significant, positive partial correlation (*partial* $r = .11, p < .05$) with technician role expertise. Actual enactment of the senior adviser role by the top communicator shows a significant, positive partial correlation (*partial* $r = .11, p < .05$) with technician role expertise. CEOs report a significant, positive partial correlation (*partial* $r = .11, p < .05$) with technician role expertise.

TABLE 6.4
Partial Correlations of Technician Role Expertise
in Department With Other Characteristics of Excellence
After Controlling for Manager Role Expertise

Other Characteristics of Excellence	Technician Role Expertise (Partial r)
Manager Role Expertise in Department ^a (zero-order correlation, not partial)	.57**
Expertise to Use Two-Way Symmetrical Model ^a	.09
Expertise to Use Two-Way Asymmetrical Model ^a	.11*
Value Dominant Coalition Places on PR ^a	.03
Support Dominant Coalition Gives to PR ^a	-.05
PR's Contribution to Strategic Planning ^a	.03
Manager Role Enactment by PR Head ^a	.08
Senior Adviser Role Enactment by PR Head ^a	.11*
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Symmetrical Model Used ^a	-.02
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Asymmetrical Model Used ^a	-.07
Support for Women Employees ^a	-.08
Support Dominant Coalition Gives to PR ^b	-.06
Value Dominant Coalition Places on PR ^b	-.02
Importance of Knowledge/Communication With Outside Groups ^b	.11*
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Asymmetrical Model Used ^b	.01
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Symmetrical Model Used ^b	-.01
Dominant Coalition Expects PR Head to Enact Manager Role ^b	.01
Dominant Coalition Expects PR Head to Enact Senior Adviser Role ^b	.07
PR's Contribution to Strategic Planning ^b	-.01
Participative Organizational Culture ^c	-.02
Overall Excellence Score	-.01

^aFrom PR head (top-communicator) questionnaire. ^bFrom CEO questionnaire. ^cFrom employee questionnaire (data aggregated for all employees in the organization surveyed).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

.05) between the importance they place on communication with outside publics and technician role expertise in their communication departments (as reported by top communicators). However, the partial correlation between overall Excellence and technician role expertise in the communication department is $-.01$.

Tables 6.3 and 6.4, along with chapter 3, underscore three important findings about organizational roles. First, departmental knowledge or expertise to enact the manager role is the single most important attribute of an excellent communication department. Second, a strong symbiotic relationship exists between manager and technician role expertise in excellent communication departments. Third, technician role expertise is of no consequence to communication Excellence without the manager role expertise within the department to put those technical resources to appropriate, strategic uses.

Role Enactment by the Top Communicator

Sixteen items were derived from previous studies of role enactment and used to operationalize four distinct organizational roles of communication managers and public relations practitioners. These included the manager role, the senior adviser role, the media relations role, and the technician role. Top communicators were asked to choose a number on the fractionation scale that "indicates how well each of the following items describes the work that you do as a public relations practitioner."

As displayed in Table 6.5, manager role enactment was measured by four activities that top communicators were asked to use to describe their own work as department heads. These items closely parallel the *expert prescriber* role as first conceptualized by Broom (Broom, 1982; Broom & Smith, 1978, 1979). The manager role enactment item that top communicators reported best described their work was being the organization's expert at solving public relations problems. This item was followed by taking responsibility for the success or failure of public relations programs, being held accountable by others in the organization for the success or failure of the public relations program, and making communication policy decisions. Means for both the raw and transformed scores were above the average. After manager role enactment was removed from the overall Excellence scale, the manager role enactment index posted a strong correlation with overall Excellence ($r = .58, p < .01$). The manager role enactment index also posted a solid reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha = .89).

Related to the manager role enactment is the role of senior adviser. Based on research and analysis conducted prior to developing questionnaires for the Excellence study (e.g., Broom & Dozier, 1986), some senior practitioners enacted a role as informal managers, providing guidance and counseling to the dominant coalition in solving public relations problems; but they were not vested with formal policymaking authority. In the Excellence study, manager and senior adviser role enactment were very highly correlated ($r = .76, p < .01$). The

TABLE 6.5
Levels of Manager and Senior Adviser Role Enactments
by the Top Communicator in the Department

Manager Role Enactment	Raw Means	Transformed Means
I'm considered the expert at solving PR problems	162.1	11.7
I take responsibility for PR program success/failure	162.1	11.7
Others hold me accountable for PR program	154.8	11.3
I make communication policy decisions	145.2	11.0
Mean	156.2	11.2
Pearson Correlation With Overall Excellence		+.58**
Cronbach's Alpha		.87
Senior Adviser Role Enactment		
I am senior counsel to top decision makers	160.0	11.6
I create opportunities for management to hear publics	118.2	10.2
I represent my organization at events and meetings	115.0	10.1
I don't make PR policy but provide suggestions	77.4	8.3
Mean	116.8	10.4
Pearson Correlation With Overall Excellence		+.51*
Cronbach's Alpha		.54

* $p < .001$, after removing manager role enactment from Excellence scale. ** $p < .001$, after removing senior adviser role enactment from Excellence scale.

senior adviser role enactment item that top communicators reported best described their work was serving as senior counsel to top decision makers when communication or public relations is involved. This was followed by creating opportunities for management to hear publics and representing their organizations at events and meetings. Top communicators reported above-average means for all three items. The fourth item, however, posted a significantly lower mean: "Although I don't make communication policy decisions, I provide decision makers with suggestions, recommendations, and plans." Although the senior adviser index posted a strong, positive correlation with overall Excellence ($r = .51, p < .01$) after senior adviser role enactment was removed from the Excellence scale, the reliability coefficient for this index was low (Cronbach's alpha = .54). The item above asserting that the top communicator does not make policy decisions was a major source of the unreliability of the measure.

Table 6.6 displays a breakdown of the indexes used to measure media relations and internal technician role enactment by top communicators. The media relations role was first identified by Dozier (1983) as an offshoot of the technician role because of its isolation from policymaking. In the Excellence study, this link between media relations and internal technician role enactment was strongly confirmed. Media relations and internal technician role enactments

TABLE 6.6
Levels of Media Relations and Internal Technician Role
Enactments by the Top Communicator in the Department

Media Relations Specialist Role Enactment	Raw Means	Transformed Means
I use my journalistic skills to find newsworthy material	145.1	12.0
I keep others informed of media coverage	143.5	12.0
I maintain media contacts for my organization	115.1	10.7
I am responsible for placing news releases	80.5	9.0
Mean	121.1	10.9
Pearson Correlation With Overall Excellence		+.58**
Partial Correlation With Excellence (manager enactment controlled)	+.02	
Cronbach's Alpha		.87
Internal Technician Role Enactment		
I edit for grammar and spelling the writing of others	89.3	9.4
I am the one who writes communication materials	87.1	9.3
I produce brochures, pamphlets, and other materials	82.6	9.1
I do photos and graphics for PR materials	30.1	5.5
Mean	72.1	8.3
Pearson Correlation With Overall Excellence		+.04
Partial Correlation With Excellence (manager enactment controlled)	-.09	
Cronbach's Alpha		.81

* $p < .001$ for zero-order Pearson correlation coefficient.

posted a strong, positive correlation among top communicators describing their own work ($r = .62, p < .01$). The media relations enactment measure that best described the work of top communicators was using their journalistic skills to figure out what the media will consider newsworthy about their organizations. This item was followed by keeping others in the organization informed of what the media report about their organization, maintaining media contacts, and placing news releases. Media relations role enactment was highly correlated with overall Excellence ($r = .58, p < .01$); however, media relations enactment was correlated highly with manager role enactment ($r = .49$). Apparently, media relations is one of the things that top communicators do in their role as managers. Once the influence of manager role enactment is controlled, the relationship between media relations role enactment and overall Excellence disappears (partial $r = .02, p > .05$). The media relations enactment index posted a good reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha = .87).

Internal technician role enactment is derived from Broom's original conceptualization of the role typology (Broom, 1982; Broom & Smith, 1978, 1979). As shown in Table 6.6, the technician role enactment item that top communicators reported as best describing their work was editing the writing of others in their

TABLE 6.7
Factor Analysis of Manager, Senior Adviser, Media Relations Specialist, and
Internal Technician Role Enactment by the
Top Communicator in the Department

	Factor Loadings	
	Manager (F1)	Senior Adviser (F2)
<i>Components of Manager Role Expertise</i>		
I am senior counsel to top decision makers	.86	
I take responsibility for PR program success/failure	.84	
Others hold me accountable for PR program	.84	
I make communication policy decisions	.83	
I'm considered the expert at solving PR problems	.82	
I represent my organization at events and meetings	.62	
I create opportunities for management to hear publics	.61	.33
I don't make PR policy but provide suggestions		.96
	Factor Loadings	
	Media Relations Specialist (F1)	Internal Technician (F2)
<i>Components of Technician Role Expertise</i>		
I keep others informed of media coverage	.86	
I use my journalistic skills to find newsworthy material	.84	.25
I maintain media contacts for my organization	.81	.33
I am responsible for placing news releases	.64	.58
I do photos and graphics for PR materials		.80
I produce brochures, pamphlets, and other materials	.25	.79
I am the one who writes communication materials	.38	.77
I edit for grammar and spelling the writing of others	.39	.64

Note. Principal components extraction with all factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 rotated to the varimax solution displayed herein. Factor analysis was conducted separately on the manager/senior adviser items and on the media relations/technician items.

scored item, the mean for this item was below average for both the raw and transformed scores. This item was followed by writing communication materials; producing brochures, pamphlets, and other materials; and doing photos and graphics for public relations materials. Although the internal technician enactment index posted a low average among top communicators (mean = 8.3 where 10.0 is average), the index is reliable (Cronbach's alpha = .81). Internal technician role enactment is not correlated with overall Excellence ($r = .04, p > .05$).

Because of the poor reliability of the senior adviser index, the high correlation between manager and senior adviser indexes, and the high correlation between media relations and internal technician indexes, factor analysis was conducted on items measuring the manager and senior adviser enactment items as one set and the media relations and internal technician items as another set. The principal components method was used to extract the factors, and factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were rotated to a varimax solution. The results are displayed in Table 6.7. It turns out that the manager/senior adviser distinction does not help to illuminate the underlying structure of the manager role. Indeed, seven of the eight items loaded heavily on the first factor. This parallels the manager role as first inductively generated through factor analysis (Broom, 1982; Broom & Dozier, 1986; Dozier, 1983; Dozier & Broom, 1995), consisting of items first developed by Broom to measure the expert prescriber, communication facilitator, and problem-solving process facilitator. Factor 2 is not interpretable, consisting of a single item that does not belong with the other measures: "Although I don't make communication policy decisions, I provide decision makers with suggestions, recommendations, and plans."

Factor analysis of the combined media relations and internal technician enactment items is also displayed in Table 6.7. After using the principal component method to extract the factors and then rotating those with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 to a varimax solution, the original delineation of the media relations and internal technician roles were replicated. That is, media relations and internal technician seem to be empirically and conceptually distinct. However, three of the four media relations items were heavily cross-loaded with the internal technician factor. By the same token, three of the four internal technician items were heavily cross-loaded with the media relations factor.

Because one purpose of scale construction and factor analysis is parsimony, the 16-item role enactment set was subjected to factor analysis as one set. Again, the principal component method was used to extract the factors, and those with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 were rotated to a varimax solution. The results are displayed in Table 6.8. Nine items loaded most heavily on Factor 1, which can be interpreted as the manager factor. Unlike the original manager factor operationalized deductively, this factor was generated inductively from patterns in the data provided by top communicators when they described their work. This empirically derived role enactment includes making communication policy decisions and taking responsibility (and being held ac-

countable) for the success or failure of public relations programs. But the role also involves facilitating communication between publics and the dominant coalition, as well as facilitating problem solving. Of the nine items, the top eight items in Table 6.8 were used to create a manager role enactment index. The item with the lowest factor loading on Factor 1 ("I use my journalistic skills to figure out what the media will consider interesting about our organization") was deleted from the new manager enactment index because it reduced the index's reliability and because it was heavily cross-loaded with Factor 2. The manager enactment index from factor analysis subsumed both the old manager and senior adviser items, but it deletes the problematic item: "Although I don't make communication policy decisions, I provide decision makers with suggestions, recommendations, and plans." The reliability of the new

TABLE 6.8
Factor Analysis of Manager and Technician Role Enactment
by the Top Communicator in the Department

Components of Manager Role Expertise	Factor Loadings	
	Manager (F1)	Technician (F2)
I am senior counsel to top decision makers	.87	
I make communication policy decisions	.83	
Others hold me accountable for PR program	.83	
I take responsibility for PR program success/failure	.82	
I'm considered the expert at solving PR problems	.80	
I keep others informed of media coverage	.69	
I create opportunities for management to hear publics	.62	
I represent my organization at events and meetings	.61	
I use my journalistic skills to find newsworthy material ^a	.60	.58
I am responsible for placing news releases		.84
I am the one who writes communication materials		.83
I produce brochures, pamphlets, and other materials		.77
I do photos and graphics for PR materials		.72
I edit for grammar and spelling the writing of others		.71
I maintain media contacts for my organization	.38	.69
I don't make PR policy but provide suggestions ^a		.50
Cronbach's Alpha	.91	.87

Note. Principal components extraction with all factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 rotated to the varimax solution displayed herein. All 16 role enactment items included in the analysis.

^aNot included in scales or in computing reliability, because of improved reliability by deleting item.

index is .91. The new index is highly correlated with overall Excellence ($r = .47, p < .01$), after the manager and senior adviser enactment measures were removed.

Seven items loaded heavily on Factor 2, which can be interpreted as the technician factor. This factor subsumes the measures of media relations and internal technician. It does not include the item heavily cross-loaded with Factor 1 ("I use my journalistic skills to figure out what the media will consider interesting about our organization"), but it does include the problematic item from the original senior adviser index ("Although I don't make communication policy decisions, I provide decision makers with suggestions, recommendations, and plans"). When reliability of the technician enactment index was computed, deletion of this latter item improved the reliability of the technician enactment index. The top six items for Factor 2 were used to compute the final index, which has a reliability coefficient of .87. The technician enactment index is not correlated with overall Excellence ($r = -.01, p > .05$).

Table 6.9 displays the relationship between manager role enactment, technician role enactment, and the other characteristics of excellence. Note that these are the new indexes derived from a single factor analysis of all 16 items.

Manager role enactment by the top communicator is highly correlated with departmental expertise to do so (enact the manager role), as well as the expertise to use the two-way models. According to top communicators, such manager role enactment is positively and significantly correlated with the value and support that the dominant coalition gives the communication department, the contribution public relations makes to strategic planning, and the expectations of the dominant coalition that the communication department use the two-way models (both symmetrical and asymmetrical). Manager role enactment is also correlated with management support for women employees and employee's perception that the organization's culture is participative.

Based on the CEO data, manager role enactment by the top communicator was not nearly so strongly linked to excellence. These lower correlations probably resulted in part because the variables of the Excellence index taken from the CEO questionnaire did not correlate so highly with variables taken from the PR

TABLE 6.9
Correlation of Manager and Technician Role Enactment
of the Top Communicator in the Department With
Other Characteristics of Excellence

Other Characteristics of Excellence	Manager Role Enactment	Technician Role Enactment
Expertise to Enact Manager Role ^a	.55**	.04
Expertise to Use Two-Way Symmetrical Model ^a	.48**	.05
Expertise to Use Two-Way Asymmetrical Model ^a	.38**	.07
Value Dominant Coalition Places on PR ^a	.42**	.10*
Support Dominant Coalition Gives to PR ^a	.39**	-.02
PR's Contribution to Strategic Planning ^a	.34**	.08
Manager Role Enactment by PR Head ^a	—	.29**
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Symmetrical Model Used ^a	.35**	-.02
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Asymmetrical Model Used ^a	.28**	.01
Support for Women Employees ^a	.30**	-.09
Support Dominant Coalition Gives to PR ^b	.11*	-.03
Value Dominant Coalition Places on PR ^b	.03	-.05
Importance of Knowledge/Communication With Outside Groups ^b	.17**	.08
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Asymmetrical Model Used ^b	.15**	-.04
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Symmetrical Model Used ^b	.05	-.12*
Dominant Coalition Expects PR Head to Enact Manager Role ^b	.11*	-.16**
Dominant Coalition Expects PR Head to Enact Senior Adviser Role ^b	.09	-.11*
PR's Contribution to Strategic Planning ^b	.12*	-.11*
Participative Organizational Culture ^c	.10*	-.01
Overall Excellence Score (manager/senior adviser enactment items removed)	.47**	-.01

^aFrom PR head (top communicator) questionnaire. ^bFrom CEO questionnaire. ^cFrom employee questionnaire (data aggregated for all employees surveyed in the organization).

* $p < .05$ for zero-order Pearson correlation coefficients. ** $p < .01$ for zero-order Pearson correlation coefficients.

head questionnaires as with other CEO variables—a trend discussed in chapter 3 and reported in several chapters of this book. Variables whose measures came from different respondents did not correlate so highly as variables whose measures came from the same respondents.

CEOs reported higher levels of dominant coalition support for the communication department when their top communicators reported higher levels of manager role enactment ($r = .11, p < .05$). However, the value of communication to the dominant coalition is not related to the level of manager role enactment of top communicators ($r = .03, p > .05$). The expectations of the dominant coalition that the two-way asymmetrical model be used are positively and significantly correlated to manager role enactment ($r = .15, p < .01$); however, no significant correlation was detected for dominant coalition expectations for use of the two-way symmetrical model and manager role enactment ($r = .05, p > .05$). Manager role enactment by the top communicator is positively and significantly correlated with expectations of the dominant coalition that the top communicator enact that role ($r = .11, p < .05$). However, manager role enactment is not correlated significantly with the dominant coalition's expectation that the senior adviser role be enacted ($r = .09, p > .05$). In part, this may be due to the low reliability of the senior adviser index. According to CEOs, manager role enactment by the top communicator is positively and significantly correlated with the importance placed on communication with outside publics ($r = .17, p < .01$) and public relations' contribution to strategic planning ($r = .12, p < .05$).

Technician role enactment by top communicators, on the other hand, is generally unrelated to characteristics of excellence. The correlation between technician role enactment and those characteristics are displayed in Table 6.9. The strongest correlation is between technician and manager role enactment ($r = .29, p < .01$). The only other positive relationship between technician role enactment and excellence is a significant, positive correlation between the value the dominant coalition places on the communication function and technician role enactment ($r = .10, p < .05$). However, this relationship disappears when the influence of manager role enactment is controlled (*partial* $r = -.02, p > .05$). CEOs generally report negative relationships between technician role enactment by their top communicators and characteristics of excellence. Overall, there is no correlation between technician role enactment by top communicators and overall Excellence ($r = -.01$).

The findings regarding role enactment by top communicators support five conclusions. First, manager role enactment is an amalgam of expert prescription, communication facilitation, and problem-solving process facilitation, replicating previous research. Excellent top communicators even use their journalistic skills to figure out what the media will find interesting about their organizations (see the cross-loading in Table 6.8.). However, the basic manager-technician distinction remains a fundamentally reliable and powerful theoretical and empirical distinction to describe and explain what practitioners do

in organizations. Second, manager role enactment by the top communicator is positively and significantly correlated with overall communication Excellence, as well as with most of the characteristics that make up the Excellence factor. Third, actual manager role enactment is dependent on the expertise—either personal or elsewhere within the department—to enact that role. Fourth, whereas communication departments must have high levels of managerial and technical expertise to become truly excellent, top communicators build excellent departments only by enacting the manager role predominantly. Fifth, excellent top communicators are activists who enact higher-than-average levels of both the manager and technician roles; however, it is manager role enactment that counts toward excellence. The only positive relationship between technician role enactment and the 21 characteristics of excellence is its relationship to manager role enactment.

Role Expectations of the Dominant Coalition

In the CEO questionnaire, participants were asked to use the fractionation scale to indicate "how well each of the following items describes the work that *you* think the *head of the public relations or communication department* should do." Because the CEO is the most powerful member of the organization's dominant coalition, these items reflect strong *role sent* expectations of the dominant coalition. The item set consisted of 16 measures adapted directly from the set of items measuring actual role enactment by top communicators. Whereas role enactment measures completed by top communicators reflect the degree to which items reflect the communicators' actual work, role expectation measures reflect what a powerful member of the dominant coalition thinks the organization's top communicator *should* be doing.

Table 6.10 provides a breakdown of manager and senior adviser role expectations as originally conceptualized. All four measures of manager role expectations posted above-average means. The item with the highest expectation was that the top communicator should serve as the organization's expert in solving public relations problems. This item was followed by the expectation that the top communicator take responsibility for the success or failure of the public relations program, that he or she should be held accountable by others in the organization (for the communication programs), and that the top communicator should make communication policy decisions. As expected, manager role expectations were positively and significantly correlated with overall Excellence ($r = .34, p < .01$), even after manager role expectation items were removed from the Excellence scale. However, the reliability of the manager role expectation index was low (Cronbach's alpha = .61), meaning that the items making up the manager role expectation index did not covary consistently with each other, perhaps indicating that the separate items measured something other than a single, unified construct.

TABLE 6.10
Manager and Senior Adviser Role Expectations of the
Dominant Coalition as Reported by the CEO

Manager Role Expectations (Top communicator should . . .)	Raw Means	Transformed Means
be the organization's expert in solving PR problems	188.5	12.5
take responsibility for success/failure of PR program	162.1	11.8
be held accountable for success/failure of PR program	154.8	11.2
make communication policy decisions	145.2	9.9
Mean	162.7	11.3
Pearson Correlation With Overall Excellence		+ .34**
Cronbach's Alpha		.61
Senior Adviser Role Expectations (Top communicator should . . .)		
be senior counsel to top decision makers	182.7	13.1
not make PR policy but provide suggestions	151.2	11.6
create opportunities for management to hear publics	139.5	11.4
represent organization at events and meetings	119.6	9.9
Mean	148.3	11.5
Pearson Correlation With Overall Excellence		+ .36**
Cronbach's Alpha		.45

** $p < .001$, after removing manager and senior adviser role expectations from Excellence scale.

Senior adviser role expectations also posted above-average means for all four items (see Table 6.10). The highest expectation of CEOs was that their top communicators should serve as senior counsel to top decision makers when communication or public relations issues are involved. This item was followed by the expectation that top communicators should not make communication policy decisions—that he or she should provide decision makers with suggestions, recommendations, and plans. Top communicators should also create opportunities for management to hear publics and represent the organization at events and meetings. As expected, the senior adviser role expectation index correlated positively and significantly with overall Excellence ($r = .36, p < .01$), even after senior adviser role expectations were removed from the Excellence scale. As with the manager role expectation index, however, the reliability of the index was low (Cronbach's alpha = .45), indicating that the index does not measure a single, unified construct in a reliable manner.

Table 6.11 displays the four items measuring media relations role expectations of CEOs. The highest expectation with regard to this role is that their top communicators should keep others in the organization informed of what the media are saying about the organization and issues important to the organization. The next highest expectation is that top communicators should use journalistic skills to figure out what the media will consider newsworthy about their organizations, followed by the expectation that top communicators should

TABLE 6.11
Media Relations Specialist and Internal Technician Role Expectations
of the Dominant Coalition as Reported by the CEO

Media Relations Expectations (Top communicator should . . .)	Raw Means	Transformed Means
keep others informed of media coverage	145.6	11.6
use journalistic skills to find newsworthy material	136.9	11.2
maintain media contacts for the organization	136.1	11.2
be responsible for placing news releases	110.0	8.8
Mean	132.2	10.7
Pearson Correlation With Overall Excellence		+ .11*
Partial Correlation With Excellence (manager expectations controlled)		+ .01
Cronbach's Alpha		.65
Internal Technician Expectations (Top communicator should . . .)		
be the one who writes communication materials	71.5	7.5
edit for grammar and spelling the writing of others	69.9	7.1
produce brochures, pamphlets, and other materials	65.8	6.9
do photos and graphics for PR materials	42.7	4.8
Mean	62.5	6.6
Pearson Correlation With Overall Excellence		+ .04
Cronbach's Alpha		.84

* $p < .05$ for zero-order Pearson correlation coefficient.

maintain media contacts for their organizations and be responsible for placing news releases. The media relations role expectation index correlated positively and significantly with overall Excellence ($r = .11, p < .05$). However, media relations role expectations are also positively correlated with manager role expectations ($r = .25, p < .01$). Once the influence of manager role expectations are controlled, the partial correlation between media relations role expectations and overall Excellence disappears (partial $r = .01, p > .05$). More problematic is the low reliability coefficient for the media relations role expectation index (Cronbach's alpha = .65), which again indicates that the index does not measure a single, unified construct reliably.

Regarding internal technician role expectations of top communicators, all four items posted lower-than-average means. With a transformed mean of 7.5 (where 10 is average), the CEOs' highest internal technician expectation was that top communicators should be the ones who write communication materials, followed by editing for grammar and spelling the writing of others in the organization; producing brochures, pamphlets, and other materials; and doing photos and graphics for public relations materials. The internal technician expectation index posted an insignificant correlation with overall Excellence ($r = .04, p > .05$). Of the four measures of role expectations for top communicators, only the internal technician expectation is highly reliable for testing relations with other variables

(Cronbach's alpha = .84). As originally operationalized, the indexes for manager, senior adviser, and media relations expectations are unreliable.

Theoretically speaking, one might expect CEOs to organize their conceptualization of the top-communicator role in a manner somewhat different from how communication managers and public relations practitioners would. Empirically, the a priori operationalization of role expectations, deduced from earlier research on communicators, did not yield reliable indexes of role expectations. Therefore, exploratory factor analysis was utilized on all 16 items in the role expectation set to determine inductively how CEOs structure their role expectations for top communicators. The principal component method of factor extraction was employed, with all factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 rotated to a varimax solution.

The rotated factor matrix for CEO role expectations appears in Table 6.12. By comparing this table with a similar factor analysis of role enactment items from the top-communicator questionnaire in Table 6.8, some key differences emerge. Top-communicator role enactment items (as reported by those top communicators) split quite nicely into two factors with few cross-loadings. The manager factor, as defined by the role enactment of top communicators, is rich and detailed. Nine items are most heavily loaded on the manager factor (Factor 1) in Table 6.8. The manager factor consists of expert prescription, communication facilitation, and problem-solving process facilitation. Manager role expectations of CEOs (Factor 2 in Table 6.12), however, are less detailed—a condensed amalgam of expert prescription, communication facilitation, and problem-solving process facilitation. Technician role enactment, as reported by top communicators (refer back to Table 6.8), consists of seven items that meld both internal technician and media relations role enactment items. The technician role expectations of CEOs, on the other hand, are entirely internal technician expectations (see Factor 1 in Table 6.12).

For CEOs, media relations items are important expectations of top communicators (see Table 6.11). Media relations expectations of CEOs appear as Factor 3 in Table 6.12. Media relations expectations include the item: "Although he or she should not make policy decisions, he or she should provide decision makers with suggestions, recommendations, and plans." The other three expectations are consistent with the media relations expectations as originally conceptualized and operationalized.

Factor 4 in Table 6.12 represents a set of unified expectations (among CEOs) that have no equivalency when role enactment is measured among top communicators. This role expectation can be interpreted as senior media manager role expectations. According to these expectations, senior media managers should take responsibility for the organization's communication or public relations programs. Because of his or her experience and training, others should consider the top communicator in this role as the organization's expert at solving public relations problems. At the same time, top communicators in this role should be

TABLE 6.12
Exploratory Factor Analysis of the Role Expectations
of the Dominant Coalition as Reported by the CEO

Technician Expectations (TEC)	TEC	MGR	MRS	SMM	REP
Top communicator should . . .					
produce brochures, pamphlets, and other materials	.86				
be the one who writes communication materials	.84				
do photos and graphics for PR materials	.77				
edit for grammar and spelling the writing of others	.72		.29		
Cronbach's Alpha = .84					
Manager Expectations (MGR)	TEC	MGR	MRS	SMM	REP
Top communicator should . . .					
be held accountable for success/failure of PR program		.82			
create opportunities for management to hear publics		.77			
make communication policy decisions		.75			.20
be senior counsel to top decision makers		.72	.44		
Cronbach's Alpha = .80					
Media Relations Expectations (MRS)	TEC	MGR	MRS	SMM	REP
Top communicator should . . .					
use journalistic skills to find newsworthy material	.24		.78		
maintain media contacts for the organization	.41		.70		
keep others informed of media coverage		.49	.65		
not make PR policy but provide suggestions			.61		-.36
Cronbach's Alpha = .73					
Senior Media Manager Expectations (SMM)	TEC	MGR	MRS	SMM	REP
Top communicator should . . .					
take responsibility for success/failure of PR program		.29		.90	
be the organization's expert in solving PR problems				.72	.59
be responsible for placing news releases	.52	-.28		.69	
Cronbach's Alpha = .69					
Representative Expectations (REP)	TEC	MGR	MRS	SMM	REP
Top communicator should . . .					
represent organization at events and meetings					.91

Note. Principal components extraction with all factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0 rotated to the varimax solution displayed herein. All 16 role expectation items from the CEO questionnaire were included in the analysis.

responsible for placing news releases. This item is heavily cross-loaded with the technician expectations factor but not the media relations factor. Although this factor is difficult to interpret without additional items, the role expectation seems to be one of a senior communicator running a public relations program along traditional lines: Public relations equals publicity. The public relations programs managed by top communicators in this role would be largely media-based programs. Factor 5 consists of a single item, the expectation that the top communicator should represent the organization at events and meetings.

The five factors indicate a more fragmented view of role expectations among CEOs, when compared with the actual role enactments of top communicators. Among CEOs, both manager and technician role expectations are truncated and short on detail. Among top communicators, manager and technician role enactments are expansive and detailed. Despite these differences, Table 6.12 indicates that the factor analysis yields reliable indexes for manager and technician role expectations; although the item set is smaller than the one used to operationalize role enactment among top communicators. The CEO manager role expectation index, as derived from the factor analysis, is reliable (Cronbach's $\alpha = .80$); the technician index (identical to the one in Table 6.12) is also reliable (Cronbach's $\alpha = .84$).

Table 6.13 displays the correlation coefficients between manager and technician role expectations of CEOs and the various characteristics of communication Excellence. Manager role expectations (as reported by the CEOs) are positively and significantly correlated with the communication department's expertise (as reported by top communicators) to enact the manager role and use the two-way models of public relations. The CEO's manager role expectations are also positively and significantly correlated with the value and support that the dominant coalition provides to public relations, as reported by top communicators. When CEOs report high manager role expectations of their top communicators, their top communicators report enacting that role more frequently.

High CEO expectations of manager role enactment are tightly linked to a number of important indicators of communication Excellence. If CEOs think their top communicators should enact the manager role frequently, they also report high support for the communication department ($r = .45, p < .01$) and value placed on communication by the dominant coalition ($r = .36, p < .01$). These same CEOs report that they want the two-way models to be used, both symmetrical ($r = .29, p < .01$) and asymmetrical ($r = .45, p < .01$). They report high contributions from their communication departments to strategic planning ($r = .30, p < .01$) and place great importance on knowledge about and communication with outside groups ($r = .44, p < .01$).

Whereas CEOs who report high manager role expectations say they want their communicators to use the two-way models, apparently the message is not

TABLE 6.13
Correlation of Manager and Technician Role Expectations
of the Dominant Coalition With Other Characteristics of Excellence

Other Characteristics of Excellence Expectations	Manager Role	Technician Role
	Expectations	
Expertise to Enact Manager Role	.13*	-.16**
Expertise to Use Two-Way Symmetrical Model ^a	.11*	-.17**
Expertise to Use Two-Way Asymmetrical Model ^a	.11*	-.11*
Value Dominant Coalition Places on PR ^a	.23**	.05
Support Dominant Coalition Gives to PR ^a	.22**	-.03
PR's Contribution to Strategic Planning ^a	.14*	.01
Manager Role Enactment by PR Head ^a	.12*	.04
Senior Adviser Role Enactment by PR Head ^a	.03	.06
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Symmetrical Model Used ^a	.07	.02
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Asymmetrical Model Used ^a	.06	-.05
Support for Women Employees ^a	.09	-.07
Support Dominant Coalition Gives to PR ^b	.45**	-.10
Value Dominant Coalition Places on PR ^b	.36**	-.01
Importance of Knowledge/Communication With Outside Groups ^b	.44**	.01
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Asymmetrical Model Used ^b	.29**	-.04
Dominant Coalition Expects Two-Way Symmetrical Model Used ^b	.45**	.02
PR's Contribution to Strategic Planning ^b	.30**	-.01
Participative Organizational Culture ^c	.11*	-.07
Overall Excellence Score (manager/senior adviser enactment items removed)	.44**	-.07

^aFrom PR head (top-communicator) questionnaire. ^bFrom CEO questionnaire. ^cFrom employee questionnaire (data aggregated for all employees surveyed in the organization; avg. $N = 12$).

* $p < .05$ for zero-order Pearson correlation coefficients. ** $p < .01$ for zero-order Pearson correlation coefficients.

getting through to top communicators. There is no significant correlation between CEOs' reports of high manager role expectations and what their top communicators say the dominant coalition wants with regard to using the two-way models, both symmetrical ($r = .07, p > .05$) and asymmetrical ($r = .06, p > .05$). Whereas expectations are clear in the minds of CEOs responding to the survey, those same expectations are not so clearly understood by top communicators who must implement those expectations. Overall, manager role expectations of CEOs are positively and significantly correlated with overall Excellence ($r = .44, p < .01$), even after manager and senior adviser items (as originally delineated) were removed from the Excellence scale.

On the other hand, technician role expectations of top communicators by their CEOs indicate no significant, positive correlations with the characteristics of communication Excellence. The only significant relationships are nega-

tive. CEOs expect their top communicators to enact the technician role in communication departments with low expertise to enact the manager role ($r = -.16, p < .01$) and low expertise to use the two-way symmetrical model ($r = -.17, p < .01$) and the two-way asymmetrical model ($r = -.11, p < .05$). The correlation between technician role expectations of the CEO and support given to the communication function (according to the CEO) is also negative, but not statistically significant ($r = -.10, p > .05$). CEOs' expectations of technician role enactment of their top communicators is negatively correlated with overall Excellence, but the relationship is not statistically significant ($r = -.07, p > .05$).

Five conclusions can be drawn from the quantitative findings regarding role expectations of the dominant coalition (as reported by the CEO) and characteristics of excellence. First, CEOs conceptualize the role of communicators in a fragmented manner. As a consequence, their role expectations are highly truncated, splintered, and confusing to top communicators who must act on them. Stated positively, communication Excellence occurs when CEOs demand excellence, top communicators understand that expectation unequivocally, and communication departments have the expertise to deliver excellence.

Second, CEOs have manager and technician role expectations for their top communicators. Generally, CEOs post higher-than-average manager role expectations for their top communicators and lower-than-average technician role expectations. Third, high CEO manager role expectations are associated with high overall Excellence of the organization's communication program, as well as with communication's contribution to strategic planning, value and support given to public relations, and manager role enactment by top communicators. That is, manager role expectations are clustered together with other expectations of excellence among CEOs.

Fourth, CEOs' technician role expectations of their top communicators have no significant positive association with overall Excellence or its components. Whereas technical expertise is critical to program execution—and excellent communication departments are superior with regard to the technical execution of programs—technician role expectations of the top communicator are not associated with excellence in any way.

Fifth, lower levels of departmental expertise to enact the manager role or use either of the two-way models of public relations are significantly associated with higher levels of technician role expectations from the CEO. We suspect that this is a push-pull relationship, replicated over time. Dominant coalitions hire communicators consistent with their technical role expectations. Because these technicians lack the expertise to enact the manager role, the dominant coalition's role expectations focus on what its communicators can do—until such time that an environmental crisis or major internal upheaval precipitates a change in the communication department.

Gender and Roles

As our literature review in this chapter revealed, scholars who have studied the effects of gender on public relations practice have devoted a great deal of attention to the roles of men and women in the field. The literature suggests that men are more likely to be communication managers and women to be technicians. If the top communicator is limited to the technician role, which may be more common for women than men, then the department will be less likely to be excellent than if the top communicator is a manager. Women who are managers, however, tend to "do it all," enacting a dual role of technician and manager.

We saw earlier in this chapter that the overall support for women in an organization correlates positively with the managerial role. In this section, we look more directly at the roles of male and female top communicators in our sample. Table 6.14 compares the means for men and women on all of the original roles scales as well as the new scales that we created after factor analyzing the original role items.

That table shows, first, that our top communicators—regardless of their gender—consistently had higher scores for enacting the manager role in comparison with the technician role. Our CEOs also consistently preferred that both male and female top communicators be managers more than technicians. *T* tests show that all of these comparisons are significantly different at the .01 level. Expertise, however, is relatively equal for most of the roles for departments headed by both men and women. Unfortunately for excellence in public relations, the critical knowledge for strategic management is the lowest of the types of expertise for both men and women. The greatest expertise, in contrast, is for administrative management and media relations.

Table 6.14 shows that there is no significant difference in the extent to which male and female top communicators enact the manager role and in the extent to which CEOs expect the manager role for their top communicator. This is true for both the original scales and the new scales developed from factor analysis. On the other hand, female top communicators are significantly more likely than males to also enact the technician role on both sets of measures. CEOs also are significantly more likely to expect their female top communicators to enact both a technician and manager role than they are to expect male top communicators to enact that dual role. Expertise was almost identical for all roles in departments headed by men and women, with the possible exception of expertise in strategic management and media relations—where men had a slight advantage. These two differences were significant at the .10 level but not at the .05 level.

These data, then, support the conclusion that female PR heads are more likely to play dual manager-technician roles than are men—even in organizations with excellent public relations departments. As our literature review concluded, these data also suggest that women may have less opportunity

TABLE 6.14
Comparison of the Roles of Male and Female Top Communicators

Comparison of the Roles of Male and Female Top Communicators			
Role Enacted	Male PR Heads	Female PR Heads	Transformed Means
Manager			
Senior Adviser	11.87	11.65	0.71
Technician	9.71	9.92	0.83
Media Relations	6.16	7.56	3.74*
Combined Management Factor	9.27	9.56	0.61
Combined Technician Factor	11.32	11.25	0.29
	7.47	8.24	2.19*
Role Expectation of CEO			
Manager			
Senior Adviser	11.47	11.17	0.81
Technician	11.44	11.54	0.31
Media Relations	5.94	7.16	2.90**
New Management Factor	10.27	11.03	2.19*
New Technician Factor	11.46	11.30	0.49
	5.94	7.16	2.90**
Role Expertise			
Manager			
Technician	10.09	10.02	0.23
Administrative Management Factor	9.89	9.89	0.02
Strategic Management Factor	11.47	11.71	0.79
Internal Technician Factor	7.74	7.07	1.75*
Media Relations Factor	9.04	9.38	0.97
	11.46	10.91	1.67*

Note. There were 191 male top communicators and 191 female top communicators.

Note. There were 191 male top communicators and 181 female top communicators in the sample of all departments, although the numbers varied slightly in different cells because of missing data. There were 129 males and 144 females in the data on the role expectation of the CEO, which were limited to the primary PR department of the organization.

*Although not significant at the .05 level, these differences were significant at the .10 level.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

than men to gain strategic expertise because of the time they must spend doing technical tasks. The gender of the top communicator, therefore, does not help or hinder communication Excellence. Female top communicators may have to work harder to develop strategic expertise, which is necessary for excellence, at the same time that they engage in technical activities that are not expected of men.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS RELATED TO ROLES

Our in-depth interview studies help to flesh out the stark numeric skeleton of the linkages among role expertise, role enactment, role expectations, and communication Excellence. We asked CEOs, top communicators, and others in 25

organizations to respond to a schedule of open-end probes about public relations in their organizations. In this way, we were able to take the cross-sectional data from the quantitative survey and supplement it with organizational histories or biographies that permitted a richer theoretical understanding of excellence as a process occurring over time, rather than as a fixed attribute of organizations.

Manager Role Competencies in the Department

Theoretically, one should not be surprised to discover that departmental expertise to enact the manager role is the single best indicator of communication Excellence in organizations. After all, manager role enactment by the top communicator is predicated on the knowledge base to do so. High manager role expectations of the dominant coalition cannot translate into excellent communication programs without the knowledge base to do so. As the CEO of a major chemical-manufacturing company put it: "If I hadn't had a couple of talented communication managers, I couldn't have done anything. You can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear."

A statewide organization that provided fund raising for arts organizations was selected for an in-depth case study because it had a low score on the Excellence scale. At the time of the survey, the communication program was under the direction of someone with no communication or public relations experience and training. A turning point for this arts organization, we learned in our interviews, was the hiring of a new CEO. Located in a politically and socially conservative state, the new CEO wanted an innovative approach to communication and public relations. The state legislature provided major funding for the arts program, but most legislators (and perhaps their constituents as well) generally disapproved of lifestyles and values associated with the creative or artistic communities. A new public relations director was hired, bringing a set of sophisticated manager role skills to the department and the organization. Using research, the new top communicator—in conjunction with other top managers—demonstrated that young people at risk of delinquency could find more socially constructive avenues for their energies through the arts. Funding for the arts was recast as a delinquency prevention strategy. The state legislature gave the arts organization its full budget request (a first), plus additional funding to better document teen participation in the arts. None of these changes would have occurred without the expertise to enact the manager role.

Manager role expertise is most usefully conceptualized as an attribute of a department, rather than an individual attribute (e.g., the top communicator). Furthermore, the manager-technician dichotomy plays a useful role as a data-analytic strategy; but our qualitative research indicates a powerful synergism when managerial and technical expertise are seen as complementary, such that the whole is greater than the sum of parts. For example, a blood bank on the West Coast of the United States was selected for case study because of its high

Excellence score on the quantitative portion of the study. During the long interviews, it became apparent that the public relations director had emerged as a member of the dominant coalition during the peak of the AIDS epidemic, when many people refused to donate blood, based on the fear that giving blood was dangerous. At that time, the top communicator had been hired for her strong journalistic and media relations skills.

Through a masterful media relations campaign, this blood bank was able to hold the drop in blood donations to about 3%. At the same time, other cities on the West Coast experienced 15% to 25% drops in donations. By responding to this crisis through traditional public relations expertise, the top communicator was able to hire a younger assistant with strong research and planning skills. These two communicators reported working together to provide the expertise—both managerial and technical—that the dominant coalition required to plan and execute excellent communication programs. The CEO indicated that it mattered little who provided the expertise. The CEO needed both types of expertise and the communication department was able to provide it.

Manager Role Enactment by the Top Communicator

Manager role expertise is a necessary but not sufficient condition for communication Excellence. Specifically, top communicators need to enact manager role behavior, often in an organizational setting where others neither understand nor appreciate a strategic approach to public relations and communication management.

For example, one public utility company in the U.S. Midwest spans four states; it scored near the top in overall Excellence at the time of the 1990–1991 survey. At the time of the case study in 1994, the top communicator supervised a staff of eight. Her expertise as a manager came, in part, from her formal education (bachelor's degree in public relations), but also from in-house training provided by the company and her own work experience. In addition, she reported that a mentoring relationship with a senior member of the dominant coalition had helped her build her manager role expertise.

As a result of her expertise and mentoring, the top communicator recognized that she needed to participate in strategic planning, to deal with the organization's relationships in a proactive manner. "Part of the problem that public relations has had in the past," she told an interviewer for the Excellence study, "is that they are the people that you bring in on the tail end to make things look better, or polish over something that's not quite right." Instead, the top communicator took it upon herself to be the "eyes and ears" of the organization, a description of her role confirmed in a separate interview with her supervisor. This expertise allowed her to carve out a role as a manager who helps solve problems, sometimes nipping them in the bud so that they never become issues. "Top management comes to accept you when they see work coming out

of the department that meets their strategic objectives," she said of her role as a communication manager. "You've got to be adding value in their eyes. Then you get a place at the table. You've got to start thinking in strategic planning terms."

Viewing public relations as proactive rather than reactive (brought in at the "tail end to make things look better") is an important attribute of manager role enactment. The top communicator for a state hospital association with high overall Excellence scores put this managerial orientation succinctly: "One must watch issues emerge, understand demographics, and be able to project into the future. If you want to move beyond [traditional reactive public relations], you really need to be able to watch the outside world and be able to anticipate what it is going to do."

Manager Role Expectations From CEOs

The case studies indicate a complex and triangulated relationship between CEO and dominant coalition expectations of manager role enactment, actual manager role enactment by the top communicator, and the departmental expertise to enact the manager role. The state hospital association mentioned earlier, for example, followed a traditional approach to public relations and organizational communication in the 1970s and 1980s. The main function of the communication department was to publish the association newsletter. As increased competition and managed care brought hospitals into increasing turmoil, the CEO of this hospital association realized he needed to make some changes: "Our whole mission changed. I realized the importance of communication with the public. I insisted on hiring new people with strong skills, both in writing and speaking and in management."

The CEO of a major American metal manufacturer did not need a crisis to know he wanted managers—not technicians—running his communication department. Originally selected because of the organization's low scores on the Excellence scale in the 1990–1991 survey, the interviewer for the Excellence study was initially perplexed when she discovered through case study interviews that the manufacturer appeared to have an excellent communication program. Two events had occurred between 1990 and 1994 to radically transform the organization. First, the chairman of the board and CEO was replaced by a new executive. This executive had once been in charge of corporate communication during his climb up the corporate ladder. At the same time, the top communicator who had completed the questionnaire in 1990 had retired. A new person now headed the communication department; the interaction was synergistic. The new top communicator (a vice president) played a strong manager role because of the importance the CEO placed on communication. The vice president for corporate communication described the CEO as a "great communicator" who speaks "with conviction" about corporate images that reflect the

substantive reality of the organization's actual relationships with constituents. Addressing an industry conference of heavy-manufacturing companies, the CEO said: "An image should be a reflection of reality—a mirror of an industry's strengths and importance. Be assured that if we don't take action to shape the image of our company and our industry, others will do it for us—and that image may be as distorted as a fun-house mirror."

On the other hand, what CEOs demand in terms of communication Excellence also can be taken away. A state lottery in the western United States was originally selected for a case study because of its near-perfect score on the Excellence scale. Since the 1990–1991 survey, however, the top managers of the state lottery organization (a hybrid public–private entity established to raise funds for the government through gambling) had changed. With the new dominant coalition came a new set of perceptions about the role of communication. The two-way models of communication so heavily used at the time of the survey were largely replaced with traditional one-way models of publicity and public information.

Although the new top communicator meets frequently with the CEO, others we interviewed in the organization indicated that these meetings are largely times for the CEO to give orders to the top communicator and exchange information. The meetings do not involve strategic decision making. Use of research also had declined dramatically. Technical functions of the communication department were subcontracted to outside firms in 1990–1991. In 1994, these technical functions had been brought back in house. According to several communicators interviewed, the role of communication in strategic planning has been drastically reduced, reflecting the prevailing philosophy of the dominant coalition that the purpose of the communication department is to implement the strategic decisions made by others. As one staffer who has weathered the transition concluded, "There is a new CEO who has a different concept of the public relations role in an organization."

Sometimes, however, organizations evolve; and temporary shifts in perspective become institutionalized. A crisis or internal change may bring about a change in the manager role expectations and enactment of top communicators. The AIDS crisis at the blood bank described earlier is a case in point. A traditional top communicator, hired for her journalistic and media relations expertise, helped the organization avert a disaster. As a consequence, the communication department had won enough power in the organization to build up its management role expertise. This expertise, in turn, provided the communication department the capacity to enact the manager role on a continuing basis.

How permanent is this change in the role of the top communicator? We asked the CEO of the blood bank if the role of the top communicator would go back to what it had been before the AIDS crisis, should the current person leave. The CEO admitted that it would be hard to replace his current top communicator, "but the [manager] perspective would not vary. We would look for another

like [the current top communicator]. That would take some effort. Others have tried and failed. But we wouldn't change our perspective."

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The results of the Excellence study solidly support our proposition that the distinction between the manager and technician role for the senior communicator in a public relations department is a core factor distinguishing excellent from less excellent departments. However, the results also show the vital supporting role of technical expertise to the management role. More than any other variable, the availability of knowledge to perform a managerial role distinguishes excellent departments from less excellent ones. Excellent departments also have higher levels of technical expertise than do less excellent departments. Nevertheless, technical expertise has value only when it is accompanied by managerial expertise. Public relations managers are most effective when they also possess technical expertise or have it available to them—especially technical knowledge in media relations. Expert technicians who have little managerial expertise or who are not supervised by expert managers have little value to the organization.

Our data also revealed more than one kind of managerial expertise. Public relations departments can possess strategic managerial expertise, administrative managerial expertise, or both. We found that excellent departments possess both kinds of expertise. In chapter 5, we showed that strategic managers are most essential to the functioning of an excellent public relations department. This chapter established, in addition, that public relations departments need administrative as well as strategic expertise. Like technical expertise, however, administrative expertise has little value without accompanying knowledge of how to practice strategic public relations. At the same time, our data show that communication departments possess less strategic knowledge than knowledge needed to practice any of the other roles.

The managerial role is equally important for public relations when the perspective of the dominant coalition is taken into account. Although CEOs view public relations roles in a more splintered and confusing way than do top communicators, the CEOs of organizations with excellent public relations departments expect their top communicators to be managers. The greater importance assigned to communication with outside groups by the dominant coalition, in addition, the stronger its expectation will be that the top communicator should be a manager rather than a technician.

CEOs also expect top communicators to be expert in media relations—more strongly than do top communicators. In addition, our results suggested that CEOs often hire top communicators because of their technical expertise but then learn that technical expertise is insufficient when a crisis or major internal

upheaval requires more strategic communication skills. When top communicators have managerial as well as technical knowledge, as our qualitative results showed, they can meet such a challenge. When they have only technical expertise, they cannot.

We also found that gender makes little difference in the role enacted by top communicators, in the role expectations of CEOs, and in the expertise of the public relations department. However, we found that female PR heads are more likely to play dual manager-technician roles than are men—even in organizations with excellent public relations departments. We also found that women may have less opportunity than men to gain strategic expertise because of the time they must spend doing technical tasks. The gender of the top communicator, therefore, does not help or hinder communication Excellence; but female top communicators may have to work harder to develop strategic expertise while they must engage in technical activities that are not expected of men.

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