

The 10 most media-savvy corporate executives

BY THE SPIKE
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THERE are some corporate executives and politicians you can pick up the phone and call any time of the work day, and even beyond, and they would come on the line. Others, once they hear 'media on the line', scamper for cover. "Tell Mr Allen I'm not here. Tell him I'm in a meeting. Tell him anything!"

Of course, I exaggerate a little bit. Most people take my calls. That's perhaps because of my longevity in the business. But many journalists complain bitterly that it's extremely difficult making contact with many executives.

For this reason, I think you will find, at least interesting, the results of an informal survey conducted among journalists, public relations professionals and producers in the print and electronic media, to determine the top 10 most media savvy corporate executives; the top five politicians; the top two public sector personalities and the top three company spokespersons.

The survey was carried out by Stracom, the online newsletter published by PR and marketing whiz and former journalist, Marie Berbick-Graham who has kindly consented to The Spike sharing the results with you. If you want more details, contact Marie at mariebg79@yahoo.co.uk.

The most media savvy personalities were chosen from 30 nominees and were selected based on the total number of votes they garnered. The criteria used included: willingness to facilitate media interviews and attitude toward journalists, articulacy and eloquence, knowledge of their business and industry, overall media relations skills and professionalism, charisma and likeability.

The top 10 most media savvy corporate executives, in order of placing, are:

- . Douglas Orane of GraceKennedy
 - . Harry Smith of Digicel
 - . Grace Silvera of Red Stripe
 - . Rodney Davis of Cable and Wireless
 - . Donovan Perkins of Pan Caribbean Financial Services
 - . Audrey Marks of PayMaster
 - . Beverley Lopez of the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ)
 - . Gordon 'Butch' Stewart, of Sandals/ATL/Jamaica Observer
 - . Ryland Campbell of Capital and Credit Financial Services
 - . Sandra Shirley of First Global Financial Services
- Top public sector personalities
- . Danville Walker, Director of Elections
 - . Mark Shields, Deputy Commissioner of Police

Top company spokespersons

- . David Geddes of the Office of Utilities regulation (OUR)
- . Nadine Newsome of the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM)
- . Winsome Callum of the Jamaica Public Service Company (JPS)

If you did not participate in the survey and you don't agree with any of the nominees, or if you think some deserving personality was left out, drop me a note.

Condolences to Garfield Myers

I know you'd all want me to express condolences on your behalf to veteran journalist, Garfield Myers and his family on the death of their beloved mother, Daisy Myers. The funeral service last Thursday was held in an old country church in seriously rustic countryside .

Colleagues there to support Garfield included: Wilton Dyer, Clarence 'Ben' Brodie, Godfrey Barnes, Horace Helps, Moses Jackson, Paget deFreitas, Audley Boyd, Vernon Davidson, Michael Gordon, Ian Burnett and yours truly.

Clare Forrester honoured by PAHO

Veteran Jamaican journalist and social communicator, Clare Forrester, was recently presented with a special award for exceptional leadership by the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO) in a ceremony at the organisation's headquarters in Washington DC. Clare who will retire from Barbados-based PAHO where she worked as media communications advisor, was praised for using her "effective journalistic and public relations skills (to) advance the work of the organisation, enhancing the PAHO brand at the sub-regional level and increasing the skills of selective regional journalists to report on health and development matters".

Clare was presented with an engraved gold watch in keeping with one of the organisation's celebrated traditions, along with the award, by the PAHO director, Dr Mirta Roses Periago.

Merrick

Needham's take

Firstly, let me exonerate The Spike from any responsibility for the 'pear' (for peer) typo last Sunday; the fault was entirely in my shop. I picked up the error in proof-reading the item but the person who made the correction then forgot to save it before transmission! So all credit to the sharp eye of Spike reader Marie Miller.

Territorial Designation

Let me try to help Ms Miller with her puzzlement with 'territorial designation', and assure her that it is certainly no 'reason for a World War', as she put it. Every UK peer has to have a territorial designation somewhere in the United

Kingdom as part of his name. Lord Morris chose Handsworth, as his first landfall on arrival many years ago as a young man from Jamaica.

Some peers with a special overseas connection may be given an additional territorial designation, such as the late Admiral of the Fleet Earl Mountbatten of Burma or the late Field Marshal the Viscount Montgomery of El Alamein, both famous World War II military leaders. However, they must still have a UK designation as well. I hope that puts Marie Miller's fears to rest. Lord Morris is a man of many noteworthy achievements, one of which is that, to the best of my knowledge, he is the very first Jamaican ever to be made a member of the British House of Lords.

Flags & football

Recently a shopping mall in the Barbican area of St Andrew has mounted a colourful display of the national flags of many countries on its outer walls. However, there were and still are several things wrong with this display. Firstly, the Jamaican National Flag was not included. An acquaintance of mine, on raising this point, was told that the display was based on countries still in the football World Cup running. However, he rightly pointed out that this was a breach of the official code for use of the Flag (available from the Jamaica Information Service).

Flag Etiquette

Anyway, the folk at the mall patriotically corrected this omission but in doing so committed another faux pas by flying the Jamaican National Flag from a short staff above all the others. It is a breach of international flag etiquette to fly or display the flag of any nation higher than that of any other, where the relevant countries are not at war. The people at the mall should have first sought technical advice, especially also when displaying flags hung vertically, which is not so simple as it may seem.

There is a lot more to flags than the layman realises and as is partly illustrated by the accompanying diagram (below). There is even a word for the technical study of flags - vexillology and, although there are not a lot of them, there are full-time, professional vexillologists in some countries.

When showing flags in newspapers and magazines, there are also several guidelines by which the publisher should abide. In protocol, right takes precedence over left and therefore our National Flag should usually be shown at the outer right (Observer's/reader's left) of a horizontal line of flags. Other national flags should be displayed in alphabetical order.

Even then, there are pitfalls for the layman; for instance, in Jamaica we would correctly place the United States Union (national) Flag under the letter 'U', but in say Haiti where the official language is French, it would come under 'E' for Etats Unis. And there are many other pitfalls for the unwary, so the best tip is to check first with a specialist in this field. More anon.

Merrick Needham is Jamaica's foremost authority on matters of protocol and currently offers consultancy for major events.

Send comments to The Spike at desal@cwjamaica.com

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