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In Big Apple Acceptance Speech, Makovsky Challenges Corporate America to Incorporate Reputation Management Into Biz School Curricula

Makovsky + Company president **Ken Makovsky**, recipient of the **2007 John W. Hill Award** at the **Big Apple Awards** last week, called for CEO action to move corporate reputation management into curricula of America's business schools. In his acceptance speech during the **PRSA-NY** ceremony, he challenged the heads of corporate communications to join together and organize a campaign to achieve this. "If the CEO of a Fortune 500 company calls the Dean of Harvard, he or she will listen," he stressed. "But this will not happen unless we, as professional communicators, stimulate and push such action."

In decrying the lack of curricula devoted to corporate reputation management among the nation's business schools, Makovsky said, "In an era when democracy is being reinvented via the Internet ... at a time when every company exists only because of public consent, and two- and three-way conversations are multiplying faster than you can say 'blogosphere,' how can potential CEOs and other senior executives hope to be on top of their game without counsel and training in the strategic management of corporate reputation?"

In noting the changes in communications practices, Makovsky said of today's public relations professionals, "We ourselves need

to show leadership and master the issues companies are facing in a flat world."

He added, "When just a single person on a mission can bring down a company with the click of a mouse, profit-making is dependent upon the ability to forge strong connections and build trust with every stakeholder. Keeping messages in a silo, so only one audience sees or hears them, is nearly impossible today. Every interest group has access to every message on the internet. This is posing a new challenge to business and one where our expertise is crucial."

Makovsky expressed his belief that "good communications is a matter of survival for corporations in today's wired world... Transparency is no longer a theoretical construct. It's a fact of life. And honest communications is the only safeguard against the risks associated with transparency."



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