

Fish Hook

B. Lou Guckian



2009 S.C.O.R.E. "Success Story"

2008 SBA Home-Based Business Champion of the Year

Statement Addressing Longstanding Professional Experience, Diversity and Flexibility

Autonomous Role in an Executive-Level Position

As a career communication professional with a longstanding, award-winning, proven track record for excellence, strong organizational and managerial skills, a master's degree in communication arts from a private prestigious university, and a communication consulting business, I am well-suited to high-level performance in autonomous positions of decision-making, authority and team-building. In addition, I am the only one among my five siblings to have completed education beyond high school; I put myself through undergraduate and graduate schools.

Develop and Implement a Communication/Marketing/Public Relations Strategy

In addition to developing a successfully implemented organizational structure for the premier corporate communication department of the United States' largest, publicly owned, combined natural gas and electric utility, I have developed and implemented two successful small businesses. I founded these initiatives upon reliable market research, strong persuasive documentation, team efforts and constituency development. Once implemented, the corporate communications department became the hub of employee, customer and government communications. As a result, mass media's perceptions evident in its reporting about the utility's operations and activities improved in quality and quantity. In addition, once launched, the barbecue sauce business grew from distribution in 11 stores to inventory in more than 200 stores within the first year. Finally, once established, my writing and consulting business grew in revenue by 71 percent in its second year over the first year and this trend continues. A well-developed and implemented communication and marketing strategy ensures results like these.

I have held progressively complex communication roles that culminated in my writing and communication consulting business as well as national publication as a serious features writer. This is due to effective direct target marketing, consistent networking and relationship-building, and delivery of consistently high-quality communication products and services. In fact, a prominent news anchorwoman of a CBS affiliate TV broadcast station in San Antonio called one of my press releases "the best she ever read," which resulted in prime-time TV coverage within two days of the press release.

As an honors graduate student of a private university of high academic standard, I researched and wrote a comprehensive, persuasive thesis which was recognized as publishable and monograph-worthy by the Journal of Elder Abuse and Neglect (the world's foremost library of research on elder abuse and neglect) of the National Institute on Aging. This accomplishment further demonstrates my ability to conceptualize and implement a major strategic plan within an allocated timeframe. It also illustrates my compassion for and advocacy of the underserved and marginalized. I am an outdoors person, a camper and lover of nature, who is at home in many environments.

Basic Functions of a Typical Position

I have experience in most of the required functions of many communication projects and am comfortable with the functions of such positions, including training staff how to conceptualize, write and disseminate various communiqué as well as orchestrating and coordinating events and functions and reporting.

Duties and Responsibilities

I have experience in the required types of duties of communication positions and am comfortable with them, including noting discrepancies and recommending solutions—a skill set that I am particularly adept at performing.

Technical Skills

I established my freelance writing and consulting business in January 2007 to provide professional writing and communication support to a diverse range of clients and industries to improve their operations and/or increase their market share. Since that time, I have written and presented to mass media press releases on behalf of clients that have garnered both broadcast and print coverage. I have enabled corporate entities to better manage their profitable operations by introducing well-structured strategic procedures.

Since 1997, my features and guest columns have appeared in national media, major daily newspapers, business journals, travel magazines, and business and medical journals.

Since 1997, I have written and published more than 175 articles in corporate publications and mass media, including national publications.

My writing and (creative and technical) communication consulting business was awarded the S.C.O.R.E. “Success Story” in 2009 and the U.S. Small Business Administration’s Home-Based Business Champion of the Year Award across the SBA’s five-state Region VI in 2008.

Both my undergraduate and graduate degrees are in communication, including core curricula in journalism, public relations and English.

I am a storyteller and a marketer. I have developed and distributed information to a wide variety of target audiences across many different industries for a diversity of purposes. Aside from developing a barbecue sauce business’s marketing materials and labeling, and developing my writing business’s website and marketing materials, other communications I have developed and distributed have included employee, customer, vendor and government communications for a utility company, human-interest feature stories for mass media consumption by magazine and newspaper readers, online content for website visitors to a 30-year CPA firm, marketing materials for hotel industry audiences, technical confidential correspondence concerning policy and procedures to worldwide military and civilian audiences across a variety of military and federal agencies, a corporate policy and procedures manual for the corporate headquarters of an international 62-year-old commercial and industrial construction contracting company, procedures manuals for accounting operations of a global outdoor advertising and radio corporation, employee communications for a legacy Texas banking system, and much more.

While I may not currently have a broad understanding of issues related to international development and transition economies or keen knowledge of other countries’ political, economic and social environments, I can learn these things in order to function well on the international stage. I am intelligent and believe I can apply the maturity, experience, education and successes I have attained thus far to an international context and am prepared to meet this challenge if presented.

I am a nationally published, Bronze-Quill award-winning writer, an editor, a communication professional and a two-time entrepreneur who is as comfortable with writing as with speaking and training others one-on-one or in groups. I have facilitated creative problem-solving brainstorming sessions professionally for public and private-sector clients. I have facilitated Chamber of Commerce networking meetings where more than 100 attendees are gathered. I have presented at a national Department of Defense communication-security conference attended by more than 100 civilian executives and military officers from many federal agencies. I have taught small business owners how to brand their organizations and to create impactful websites and marketing materials. I have taught nonprofit groups how to organize and document their organizations in order to qualify for philanthropic funding and have secured funding for nonprofits. I have taught display advertising account managers of a major daily Hearst newspaper how to maximize their use of research data and strategically created sales presentations to increase ad revenue. I have taught hotel staff, who had never worked at a hotel prior, how to handle front-desk operations as well as how to handle housekeeping and maintenance emergencies.

I graduated cum laude with an undergraduate degree in interdisciplinary communications with a 3.56 GPA, and attained with honors and a 4.0 GPA my graduate degree in communication arts, which focused on mass media and the convergence of mass media and included a comprehensively researched persuasive thesis.

Management Skills

As an entrepreneur, I developed and successfully established two businesses, one of which is my writing and communication consulting business, FishHook.

As a former senior employee and key member of an executive-level strategic-planning committee, I developed an organizational structure for a corporate communication department of the United States' largest, publicly owned, combined natural gas and electric utility. The plan was adopted by the CEO of City Public Service in 2000, was implemented in 2002, and it remains in force today.

Also as a former senior employee of CPS, most of my time was spent in the field building employee morale while ensuring that what I spoke about and wrote about was supported by senior executives as well as by the organization's other constituencies, including government officials and financial auditors.

While an executive with a commercial real estate property management firm, J. Robertson and Associates, I resided and worked onsite at hotels in niche markets while direct-marketing the property and its programs to constituencies in business, academia and government, and while managing the property and supervising hotel staff. In two years' time, I helped turn around four previously under-performing hotel properties located in Texas, Arkansas, Missouri and Virginia, training management staff onsite as I went in effective direct marketing and employee development as "customer servants."

Interpersonal Skills

My goal is to be of service. My communication skills, maturity and practical experience across a wide range of industries and media have afforded me the understanding that none of us achieves anything without others' help. Only through living and practicing patience, tolerance, listening, compassion, support and a welcoming understanding of others' needs do true, long-term relationships grow and prosper. This idea can be applied to organizations and media relations.

As I have grown professionally and spiritually, my interpersonal skills have also matured over time. Communication is a two-way process that begins with listening. Sharing and understanding varying points of view in order to create an agreeable, mutually beneficial solution should always be the goal, whether in business or in personal life. Mutual respect and compassion are musts in any type of relationship, in any type of endeavor. We are, after all, human beings with the capacity to listen, to understand, to reach agreeable solutions.

While managing and marketing hotel properties on a zero budget, for example, it was important that I motivate employees and keep their morale high and service-oriented while zeroing in on target decision-makers who would sign service agreements for a volume of room nights at the desired room rate set by my corporate headquarters—and follow through thanks to superior customer service. Neither of these attained objectives would have been realized with a one-sided shotgun approach to communication. We must consider with respect and understanding all stakeholders' points of view in order to achieve optimal outcomes that benefit everyone concerned.

Aside from body language when face-to-face, interpersonal skills also come into play when illustrating communications via the web or in print publications. It is important that each gender and all races, ethnicities, ages and other diversities be illustrated vs. taking a single-minded approach that may otherwise appear to favor one over another. For example, if a communication requires a graphic illustration or photograph, attempts should be made to photograph both male and female, both young and old, both laborer and professional, and so on, to instill a sense of connectedness vs. separateness in the overall audience for which the communication is designed.

Throughout my career, whether working as senior writer for corporate communications for the nation's largest combined natural gas and electric utility company or as owner of a business, stellar communication and follow-through have proven to be integral to my success with reaching and developing relationships with a variety audiences, and I have learned that good interpersonal skills are applicable across all communication media, including face-to-face, print, broadcast and electronic media. Paying attention to the details and to the human aspect of communication can make a huge difference in the outcome of any communication effort.

Communication Skills

I am a nationally published, three-time Bronze Quill Award winner for my communication projects including technical writing, printed publications and photography, and my communication business was nominated in its first year and subsequently awarded in its second year the U.S. Small Business Administration's Home-Based Business Champion of the Year in 2008 across the local 79-county district and a five-state region.

My work has received publication in national magazines and websites, major daily Hearst newspapers, business and medical journals and magazines and corporate media. The first story I published in 1997 appeared on the front page of the Lifestyles section of the *San Antonio Express-News*, a major daily newspaper in what then was the 10th and now is the 7th largest city in the nation.

Having written and presented a press release on behalf of a little-known nonprofit client to local broadcast and print media, Deborah Knapp Bonilla, a veteran news anchor of KENS-TV, a CBS affiliate, immediately contacted me to coordinate coverage, which she filmed and produced and aired on KENS only two days after receiving and reading what she called "the best press release she had ever read." (Copy of press release available at www.guckianwriter.com.) The nonprofit claims results included a marked upsurge in volunteers and other resources.

While I do not possess language skills other than English, I am confident I could work successfully with an interpreter and/or translator during assignment to an area for which I lack direct experience, and I am typically a quick-study and flexible in new or unfamiliar environments. Experience has taught me that a positive attitude and a genuine willingness to learn and to succeed can often overcome unique challenges.

Remote Periods of Performance

I am a single adult with no dependents. I am able, willing and ready to travel to fulfill an assignment.

U.S. Citizen/Secret Level

I am a U.S. citizen born and raised in San Antonio, Texas. I also am a second-generation federal employee. (My father earned two Bronze Medals serving in Europe during World War II, and he held a top secret security clearance for more than 30 years until retirement in 1981.) I held a top secret security clearance from 1982 through 1988 while employed by the U.S. Department of Defense.

Specific Technical Experience

Betty Lou Guckian

Technical Writing / Procedures and Training Manuals – Clear Channel Communications (2010)

Recruited and hired to provide specialized experience as a writer/editor and publication consultant to the corporate financial operation and senior managers of a multi-billion national outdoor advertising operation—which due to reorganization and centralization is introducing a new financial management software system provided by Dunn & Bradstreet, and thus, is completely rewriting and in some cases creating from scratch its policies and procedures for the Billing, Collections, Lease Payables, Commission and Credit departments. Served as technical writer/editor to corporate accounting management team during aggressive development and implementation of new systems and policies and procedures during company restructuring.

Technical Writing / Policy and Procedures Manuals / Intranet Content – CCC Group Inc. (2007-2009)

Organized and improved multiple employee communication media for a longstanding industrial construction contracting company with offices in the U.S. and abroad, including a corporate policy and procedures manual, the corporate intranet, the corporate employee newsletter, estimating project procedures, and employee orientations. Interviewed the company's retired founders and others to capture and document the organization's history and evolving culture, and converted videotaped speeches into transcriptions, for the corporate archives.

Website Content Development – Steven Bankler CPA (2007-2010)

Conceived, developed and oversaw implementation of the “forensic” brand and premier professional website for a 30-year-old CPA firm and sole investigative tax accountant for the U.S. Senate Whitewater Committee.

Technical Writing / Online Users' Manual – EG&G / TAC Worldwide (2007)

Edited, improved, expanded and tested an electronic technical user's manual for a federal client's proprietary software program designed to streamline logistics management for a major federal agency's warehousing and distribution system.

Technical Writing / Awards – IABC Bronze Quill (2002)

Awarded for effectively writing a series of articles for employee magazine that explained rollout, purpose, technology and impact of SAP computer hardware and software, which totally replaced legacy systems, on employees, the organization and its customers. The award recognized that the articles took a very complex topic and made it readable and comprehensible, and therefore useful, to a wide-ranging employee audience that included 50% field labor and 50% professional workforce at all levels of employment and management. Reading audience also included the Board of Trustees, government officials and vendors.

Technical Writing / Employee Communications – CPS Energy (1999-2004)

Led select employee communication activities, often consulting with top executives on strategy, for the nation's largest publicly owned, combined natural gas and electric utility. Conceived and presented an organizational model, subsequently adopted by the CEO, for creation of the company's first corporate communication department to oversee and synergize all functions and products of internal and external communication. Among many other duties related to communicating complex ideas and concepts, produced unique articles for the employee magazine that explained the intricate workings of gas and electric energy company assets such as technologically complicated power plants and gas pipelines.

Technical Editor / Client Communications – Universal Dataproducts, Inc. (1991-1993)

Working alongside technology experts, edited technical articles for the client newsletter to ensure audience interest and comprehension. Organized booth layout and content for, and participated in, a computer-hardware trade show. Maintained a library of technology marketing literature.

Technical Writing / Secure Communications – U.S. Department of Defense, Headquarters Electronic Security Command, USAF / AFCSC (1982-1988)

Directed the functions of a unique, top-secret Technical Information Center for a Major Command of the U.S. Air Force formerly located at U.S. Electronic Security Command (ESC), Air Force Cryptologic Support Center, at Kelly AFB, Texas. Cataloged equipment test data concerning compromising emanations, and corresponded with security officers worldwide and with the National Security Agency concerning test results. Hand-picked by Col. Rolf Smith for certification as a Creative Problem-Solver and to serve a six-month rotational role as an Instructor with the premier Innovation Center at ESC. Accompanied high-ranking officers to military installations in the U.S. to conduct innovative-thinking seminars and workshops and prepare reports concerning results of problem-solving initiatives to the Major Command. Recruited to write security instructional materials, and to participate on a project team to develop a logistics plan for, and present at, the annual national Communication Security conference. Presented at a national Department of Defense communication-security conference attended by more than 100 civilian executives and military officers from numerous federal agencies tasked with communication security.