

does that affect management's goals of motivating individuals to step out and perform new tasks, to find original solutions, and to be inspired to press ahead of the crowd?

### ***We Expect Intensity and Shock***

The camera zooms in where you and I would fear to tread. Television, in communicating everything, indiscriminately, in full color and tight close-up, has broken the accepted norms of what we communicate about, simply because we can do it technically. Violence, conflict, and tragedy become abstractions and commonplace. We're used to the close-up of the body bag and the private weeping made public.

Effect? Commonplace, cool, didactic, functional business messages can't hold a candle to what we're exposed to on TV. Hard to generate much interest in just facts without some stimulating visual additives **and** general razzle-dazzle.

So, that's the current scene: Telling, listening, learning, information giving/getting are permanently changed. Pace matters. People expect an edited, telescoped version of anything new and unfamiliar, amply laced with visual reinforcement. We're a passive audience, needing active engagement to stay tuned in. The attention span is now shorter, the need to think and understand is now dampened, and people have been demoted as central truth tellers.

### ***A Qualifier***

Having just made a great case for the doom-and-gloom sayers about what the failure of our society will be, I need to add another thought, especially since I spent most of my life working in television as a communicator, using those self-same techniques I've just been decrying . . .

Let's not just get mad at television. We can't un-invent it. Like cars, it's here. A mixed blessing, and we have to live with the pollution.

There's much to learn about our natural tendencies and how television has built on them. And I still believe in TV's fabulous potential.

At its best, television is the most *effective* method yet devised for giving mass information. It brings every brand of reality into every household, exposing new ideas, social problems, endless kinds of people, and issues from every walk of life to us all, across the board, without