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## Summary

After a 20-year career as a corporate public relations executive, Potter left his job as head of communications for Cigna Corporation after a crisis of conscience that eventually led him to speak out about how the business practices of health insurers has caused or contributed to many of the most intractable problems of the U.S. health care system. In widely covered testimony before Congress in 2009, he disclosed how insurance companies, as part of their efforts to boost profits, have engaged in practices that have resulted in millions of Americans being forced into the ranks of the uninsured and underinsured and how they have developed and implemented PR and lobbying to defeat any reform initiatives that would adversely affect their bottom lines.

Since then he have spoken at more than 200 public forums, been the subject of numerous articles in the U.S. and foreign media, authored *Deadly Spin: An Insurance Company Insider Speaks Out on How Corporate PR Is Killing Health Care and Deceiving Americans*, an award-winning book that is both an expose of the insurance industry and a stark warning that corporate spin is distorting democracy, and written numerous articles as a health policy expert (see addendum). He also has appeared frequently as a guest on ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, FOX, MSNBC, PBS and NPR news programs.

Potter currently serves as a senior analyst at the The Center for Public Integrity, a non-partisan nonprofit organization that produces original investigative journalism on issues of public concern. He is also a contributing writer to the *Huffington Post* and a health care analyst for MSNBC. In 2010 he served as consumer representative to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners.

Prior to joining Cigna, where he held a variety of positions over 15 years, he headed communications at Humana Inc., another large for-profit health insurer. Before that he was director of public relations and advertising for a large hospital system in Tennessee and a partner in an Atlanta-based public relations firm.

Potter's first career was in journalism. He wrote about business and politics and served as the Nashville bureau chief for The Memphis Press-Scimitar before being promoted to the Scripps-Howard News Bureau in Washington, where he covered Congress, the White House and the Supreme Court. He also wrote a weekly political column for Scripps-Howard newspapers.

## **Previous Experience**

### **Vice President, Corporate Communications, chief Corporate Spokesperson, Cigna Corporation, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 2001-2008**

Served as Cigna's voice to national and international media, increasing the public's awareness of the company and its transformation from a multiline insurance company to a preeminent employee benefits and health services company. Worked daily with reporters at influential publications and media outlets including *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *Financial Times*, Bloomberg, Dow Jones, Reuters, network and cable TV news organizations as well as local and trade media. Responsible for all financial communications to the media, working closely with Investor Relations, and the production of the company's annual report. As chief spokesperson, navigated the company through a "perfect storm" of adverse events, including restructuring and other charges totaling more than \$1 billion, a reduction in earnings guidance that contributed to a drop in share price and an SEC inquiry, high-profile litigation and the settlement of an OIG investigation involving Medicare cost reports. Led public and media relations efforts to support Cigna's subsequent turnaround. Was awarded the company's Summit and Optima awards for exemplary service in handling external communications surrounding these and other events and ensuring that the company's point of view and key messages were included in media coverage.

Secured selective media and speaking opportunities and provided executive communications counsel, media training and speechwriting support to the CEO. Supported other executives and managers, including market leaders and medical directors and nurses, by positioning them as experts to the media when appropriate.

Developed and led a weekly "news desk" conference call with all the company's communications professionals to ensure message consistency across the organization; created an online marketing and public relations calendar; and devised and implemented a program to collect and evaluate media stories about the company and key competitors. Managed the company's corporate communications staff outside public relations agency.

Led the Cigna Foundation and Cigna Civic Affairs, the philanthropic and community service areas of the organization. Also served as a member of the Public Policy Group, which formulated the company's positions on a wide range of issues, primarily pertaining to health care reform proposals and initiatives, and the Public Policy Council, which was chaired by the CEO and which set direction for the Public Policy Group.

### **Assistant Vice President, Corporate Relations and Public Affairs Communications, Cigna Corporation, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 1997-2001**

Provided communications support to federal and state government affairs departments and senior management and served as spokesperson to the media on public policy issues, especially those affecting the company's health care operations. Represented the company on public affairs and communications committees of numerous trade groups and coalitions, including America's Health Insurance Plans, the Healthcare Leadership Council and the Health Benefits Coalition. Served as a founding member, representing Cigna, of the Council for Affordable, Quality Healthcare (CAQH), a non-profit alliance

of leading health plans created initially to defend and promote managed care through public relations and advertising initiatives.

**Director, Cigna HealthCare Communications, Bloomfield, Connecticut, 1993-1997**

Was recruited to increase the awareness and enhance the reputation of Cigna's health care operations. At the time, Cigna HealthCare was not as well known as many competitors. Developed strategy of introducing the company to key reporters, which led to steadily increasing positive positioning in the media that contributed to the company's rapid membership growth in the mid- to late-1990s and to the company's being recognized as one of the nation's leading health care organizations. Also, with the chief medical officer and his staff, developed rapid-response mechanism for handling media inquiries pertaining to member and provider complaints. This was highly successful in keeping most such inquiries from becoming news stories at a time when managed care "horror stories" abounded.

Also managed the external communications supporting Cigna's acquisitions, including the purchase of Tel-Drug in 1993 and Healthsource in 1997. Additionally, staged regional events to establish an identity for Cigna as an advocate for women's and infant health, including Corporate Summits for Children in several major cities.

**Director, Corporate Communications, Humana Inc., Louisville, Kentucky, 1991-1993**

Led external communications for Humana after the spin-off of its hospitals. Provided support to the president and the chairman and CEO on media and public affairs communications issues, including the Clinton health care reform proposal. Served as spokesperson for the company nationally and in markets where it operated.

**Senior Public Affairs Manager, Humana Inc., Louisville, Kentucky, 1989-1991**

Provided communications support to Humana's hospital division. Developed a communications template for acquisitions and divestitures and handled internal and external communications for each A&D activity. Also successfully represented the company's interests as a lobbyist during a legislative session in Tennessee during a contentious debate over a certificate of need for a replacement hospital near Nashville. Helped develop messaging and damage control plan when ABC News ran a series of reports about high hospital costs that featured Humana prominently.

**Director of Public Relations and Advertising, The Baptist Health System of East Tennessee, Knoxville, Tennessee, 1987-1989**

Was responsible for all public relations, internal communications and advertising activities and budgets and managed the health system's advertising/public relations firm. Focused on rebuilding the health system's reputation and brand after years of inattention. Also produced the system's annual report and provided communications counsel to the CEO, CFO and other senior executives.

**Vice President and Partner, McKenzie, Gordon & Potter, Atlanta, Georgia, 1983-1987**

Cofounder and principal of public relations firm. Helped grow client base and served as lead account executive for many of the firm's accounts, including health care organizations, real estate developers and a large Atlanta-based law firm.

### **Prior Experience**

First career was as a newspaper reporter in Memphis, Nashville and Washington. Covered Memphis businesses and local government before being named Nashville bureau chief responsible for coverage of the governor's office and state legislature. After just two years in Nashville was promoted to Scripps-Howard News Bureau in Washington and covered Congress, the White House and Supreme Court. Also wrote a weekly political column.

Was recruited from Washington to serve as press secretary to Democratic nominee for governor of Tennessee. Following the campaign, served as lobbyist in Washington for the organizers of the World's Fair that was held in Knoxville. Also served as member of the public relations and international marketing team for the Fair and traveled on behalf of the Fair to Europe, Africa and South America on country recruitment missions.

### **Education**

University of Tennessee, Knoxville — B.A. in Communications

Postgraduate work in journalism and public relations

### **Memberships**

Accredited member (APR) of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)

Member, PRSA and PRSA Health Academy

Member, The Society of Professional Journalists

Member, The National Press Club

Co-chair, America's Health Insurance Plans' Health Literacy Task Force, 2005-2008

Member, America's Health Insurance Plans' Strategic Communications Committee, 1997-2007