

Summary of Qualifications



Karl Gentles brings 20 years experience designing and implementing strategic communications programs across a diverse range of industries. His experience with complex corporate and political issues has earned him a reputation as a strategic counsellor for some of the top corporations in Phoenix. A self-starter and entrepreneur with deep experience in financial, economic, nonprofit, and public affairs, result in proactive initiatives to address quickly changing, and in many cases, sensitive corporate reputational issues. Clients include Bank of the West, Midwestern University, Back to School Clothing Drive, NightLight Pediatric Urgent Care, Arizona School Choice Trust, Friends of Cody Williams, Arizona School Tuition Organizations Association, Michael Brad Bayless and Associates, and others. His work with local and national media, community-based organizations, local governments, elected and city/state staff, and large corporate clients provides his clients with the experience required to form mutually beneficial relationships. Prior to forming KGPR, Karl served as Director of Corporate Communications for military insurer USAA.

Disciplines/Specialties

- Corporate Communications
- Reputation Management
- Issues Management
- Media Strategy
- Political Strategy
- Nonprofit Management

Education

- B.S., Organizational Communication, Arizona State University
- MBA, Business Management, Arizona State University

Professional Affiliations

- Public Relations Society of America (PRSA); accredited member (APR)
- Fiesta Bowl Committee, member
- Phoenix Industrial Development Authority, director

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Experience

USAA

Director/Corporate Communications

As one of the first employees for USAA in Phoenix, Karl was charged with developing USAA's relationships with community, civic, political, and business community organizations in addition to building a communications division focused on employee communications, public/media relations, and public affairs activities. Program successes included creating valuable business process change communications for an operation that expanded from 22 employees to more than 3,000 in three years, various corporate reorganizations, and new product introductions. His successful communication strategy helped relocate more than 2,000 employees to a new master-planned corporate campus within two years of joining the company. As a result USAA was recognized by the *Phoenix Business Journal's* Best Places to Work.

GREATER PHOENIX ECONOMIC COUNCIL

Manager/Media Relations

At GPEC, Karl was responsible for developed media strategies to increase positive coverage of Greater Phoenix in national and international media outlets. Under his leadership, Karl managed more than 50 confidential relocation announcements including USAA's expansion to Phoenix and placed over 85 stories in top-tier national and international media outlets. To create greater awareness of the region as an attractive corporate relocation place, Karl organized more than a dozen inbound and outbound media missions targeting reporters from France, Germany, London, Japan, and national outlets resulting in stories appearing in *The Economist*, *London Times*, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, *Yomiuri Shimbun*, *Agence France Presse*, *Barrons*, *Kiplingers Personal Finance*, and *Business Week*. Results included more than \$3.8 million in advertising impact and \$700,000 advertising equivalency.



BANK ONE

AVP/Corporate Relations

During his tenure at Bank One, Gentles led several significant efforts to build dormant programs into strong Bank divisions. As the lead for the Bank's state Political Action Committee (PAC) activities, he developed a corporate fundraising and political contributions strategy resulting in increasing the Bank's PAC membership by 271 percent and fundraising by 216 percent. Karl also directed an employee grassroots effort on ATM fees, bankruptcy reform, and financial modernization. He also took on a division of the Marketing group leading a nine-member employee team charged with increasing the Bank's presence and product penetration in minority, low-income, and underserved communities in Arizona, Colorado, and Utah. His team launched the first mobile lending bank branch in State of Arizona.

U.S. SENATOR JOHN McCAIN

Staff Assistant

This dynamic role ranged from maintaining relationships with local business, political, and community groups to organizing the first Arizona business delegation to travel to Kuwait after the 1991 Persian Gulf War. His work on local immigration issues resulted in numerous family reunifications, citizenships, and permanent residency. Karl's legislative work included developing positions on civil rights and foreign policy issues.