

HE TEACHES CEOS NEW TRICKS

■ Tired of using pie charts and handshakes to inspire employees and woo customers? Call **Bill Herz**. He's a professional magician who teaches sleight of hand to CEOs and other top corporate brass to help them add a touch of you know what to their pitch. Under Herz's tutelage, for example, MCI Communications President **Bert Roberts** learned how to feed a man into a fax machine and slide out him out the other side, flat. Roberts, who took one 15-minute lesson to get his act right, used an actor to portray an employee of competitor AT&T at an MCI sales meeting to underscore his message: "Flatten the competition." Sorry, no details on how any of Herz's tricks work.

Lamar Chesney, controller of Coca-Cola Enterprises, used his new legerdemain to dazzle 110 fellow number crunchers at a lecture. He invited three in the audience to write down a number and conceal their choice. Then he switched on a projector and, presto, the total flashed on the screen. Says Chesney: "It really put pizazz into the presentation."

Herz, 36, got his first magic kit when he was 8 and did the

kiddie party circuit throughout high school in Mamaroneck, New York. After graduating from Cornell with a degree in hotel administration in 1981, he worked for a spell writing sweepstake rules. "But I missed magic," recalls Herz, who decided to try his hand on the nightclub circuit. Finding that scene "seedy," he turned

REINHOLD SPERGER



Bill Herz lends himself a hand.

to corporate customers in 1983.

Other alumni of Herz's Magicorp Productions include CEO **Louis Gerstner** of RJR Nabisco and **Jonathan Tisch**, president of Loews Hotels. Fees start at \$1,000. Too steep? Herz's *Secrets of the Astonishing Executive* is available in paperback for \$9.