The Value of Communication During a Crisis: Insights From Strategic Communication Research

Pre-Crisis

Objective
What is crisis communication?
- Causes and consequences of crises
- Effective crisis communication models
- Preparedness

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Pre-Crisis

The best crisis is one you prevent!

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During Crisis

Typology of Crises

Post-Crisis

Summary

Operational Triage

Presented by: Lydia Chang, Robert Underwood, Winnie and Xavier Chin
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Objectives

- What is Crisis Communication?
- Causes and Consequences of Crisis
- Effective Crisis Communication: How?
- Response Strategy
- Summary

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Crisis Communication

Definition of Organisational Crisis:
Significant events characterised by ambiguity of cause and effect, that threatens viability of organisations
(Paessler & Clark, 1999)

Crisis Communication
Definition of Crisis Communication:
Function of Public Relations designed to protect reputation of individuals, company or organisations against public challenges
(Heide & Simonson, 2012)

Consequences of Crisis
- Loss of reputation and trust
- Loss of customers and market share
- Harm to stakeholders
- Legal ramifications
(Selnow & Ulmer, 2008)

Causes of Crisis
- Failures in foresight, warning and risk perception
- Breakdowns in decision-making and monitoring
- Interactive complexity and Accident theory
(Selnow & Ulmer, 2008)

Effective Crisis Communication
Three-Stage Model:
- Pre-Crisis
- During Crisis
- Post-Crisis
(Coombs, 2012)
Pre-Crisis

“The best crisis, is the one prevented”  
(Ayoko, 2015)

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Pre-Crisis: Anticipation

Identifying Crisis Communication Team:

- Small team of senior executives
- Identify and train spokespersons

(Cohn, 1991)

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During Crisis

- Typology of crisis
- Types of crisis
- How do organisation access threats and protect reputation from crisis?

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Typology & Clusters of Crisis

**Typology of Crisis**

- Internal-Normal
- Internal-Abnormal
- External-Normal
- External-Abnormal

(Synder, Hall, Robertson, Jasinski & Miller, 2006)

**Clusters of Crisis**

Three Crisis Clusters:

1. Victim
2. Accidental
3. Intentional/Preventable

(Coombs, 2007)
Accessing Threats & Protecting Reputation

Step 1:
Determine initial crisis responsibility

Step 2:
Assess crisis and relationship history and severity of its damage

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