

Union Specific

The Unique & Challenging Role of Crisis Communications

*Sylvia Ewing for
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Who will you turn to ?

- Create a working group or task force before hand.
- Include those that deal
 - with the public
 - with suppliers
 - with government agencies
 - with other important allies, connections

Insure that a cross section of your members can
be heard, and

Minimize the chaos of too many voices.

Act Fast Act First

See and act on a problem on the horizon
before it becomes a crisis.

**Brief the media, editorial boards
columnists and key internal players in
advance.**

*You can get more informed reporting as well
as an early sense of how audiences perceive
your message.*

Prepare Allies

- Know which third party experts or organizational allies you can turn to.
- Get them to support your position in a credible and objective way with quotes and relevant background information
- Make sure you clear it with them before providing their names to reporters.

Rely on the Best

- Choose the right spokesperson they must be
 - Credible
 - Authoritative
 - Articulate
 - Sympathetic, cool
 - Accessible

Plan for the Worst That Could Happen?

- Develop a comprehensive communications strategy that includes
- “what if’s”
- worse case scenarios. You must plan for the worst.
- Don’t censor yourself or feel guilty about planning for bad situations.

Simple is Better

Get the facts and then create a SIMPLE message.

Crises often breed conflicting, confusing and incorrect information. Fight through this fog with a message that is

- concise
- easy to communicate and understand
- consistent with your goals

This message must address the impact of the situation in human terms.

Plan ahead!

- Create these printed materials:

- background sheets
- Frequently Asked Questions,
- key financial facts,
- leadership lists, bios and other materials that can be used and/or refined on short notice.

Think about both internal and external audiences.

Stockpile reports, white papers and articles that can strengthen and/or explain your position.

Keep Going

- When the crisis is over review your response, keep communicating and stay prepared.
- An informed and empowered workforce is a more effective workforce.
- Stay in-touch on a regular basis and you are better able to meet a crisis.
