

Image Restoration: From Theory to Practice - the case of Manny Pacquiao and Nike Company

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to find out whether Manny Pacquiao applied the Image Restoration Theory after making derogatory remarks against LGBT (Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual and Transsexual/transgender) community. The study used Image Restoration theory by Benoit. The study used content analysis Pacquiao's statement. The units of analysis in the study were words, phrases, sentences and images. The inter rater reliability was $k = .76$ and there was 78.57% coder agreement, which was satisfactory. The study found out that Pacquiao used some strategies from the theory. He used mortification, differentiation, transcendence bolstering and intentions. By using several strategies Pacquiao was able to repair his image. In addition, the use of the Bible to support his apology was well thought out and can be used on other image restoration occasion. The quotes from the Bible and the Nike Company T-shirts he wore when giving his statement were symbols of apology in themselves. The study recommended that Pacquiao would have defined his publics first before repairing his image. Pacquiao would have clearly targeted his first message at Nike Company, second message at LGBT community and the third one to the other publics.

Keywords: Image Restoration, Nike, Manny Pacquiao, LGBT

1.0 Introduction

According to Benoit, Image Restoration Theory is a set of strategies that organizations or individuals can use to mitigate damage to their image in the event that their organizational or individual reputation has been damaged. The theory is premised on the fact that that the accused must be responsible for a given action and that the action must be offensive (Benoit, 1995).

Therefore, based on these two components the study is relevant because Nike Company withdrew Manny Pacquiao endorsement and sponsorship deal after he made derogative remarks against LGBT people. His comments followed a string of unexpected events against Nike Company as well as Manny Pacquiao himself.

1.1 Background to the Study

Manny Pacquiao provoked controversy after saying people in same-sex relationships "are worse than animals." At the time of his remarks, the 37-year-old was running for a seat in the Philippines senate in May 2016 elections as a conservative Christian (Jay, 2016; Perez, 2016; Tasch, 2016; Rovell, 2016). Manny Pacquiao said:

"Do you see animals mating with the same sex? Animals are better because they can distinguish male from female. If men mate with men and women mate with women they are worse than animals," (TV5).

The above comments were made on 14th February, 2016 during an interview on TV 5. Hours after the interview, Manny Pacquiao did not seem apologetic according to his Facebook and Instagram pages. Manny Pacquiao insisted that he was just telling the truth according to the Bible (Perez, 2016; Tasch, 2016).

Pacquiao (2016) posted an image of himself with his wife and wrote:

I rather obey the Lord's command than obeying the desires of the flesh. I'm not condemning anyone, but I'm just telling the truth of what the Bible says. The truth from the Bible is what changed me from my old ways. 1 Corinthians 6: 9, 'Or do you know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men.' God bless everyone I love you all.

However as the anger from LGBT grew, Manny Pacquiao posted an apology on Tuesday, 15th February, 2016. In the tweet, Pacquiao had a video message in Filipino wearing a Nike shirt with the special logo the company has for him. The apology was posted on his Facebook and Twitter accounts (Rovell, 2016). Manny Pacquiao said:

"I'm sorry for hurting people by comparing homosexuals to animals. Please forgive me for those I've hurt. I still stand on my belief that I'm against same sex marriage because of what the Bible says, but I'm not condemning LGBT. I love you all with the love of the Lord. God bless you all and I'm praying for you."

According to Jay (2016), Nike through its spokesperson, Mary Remuzzi, ended the Manny Pacquiao deal. However, it is important to note that the push to end the endorsement deal with the fighter was necessitated by the petition signed by the LGBT group (Jay, 2016). The overriding reason why Nike took the action of ending the deal and not defending Manny Pacquiao was because Nike is in business and it is conscious of its image.

The spokesperson in her statement acknowledged that gays and lesbians are part of the audience that purchases Nike's products. The actual statement by Mary Remuzzi was:

"We find Manny Pacquiao's comments abhorrent ... Nike strongly opposes discrimination of any kind and has a long history of supporting and standing up for the rights of the LGBT community. We no longer have a relationship with Manny Pacquiao." (Tasch, 2016).

After Nike ended (17th February, 2016) Manny Pacquiao's sponsorship deal, people in Philippines burned Nike shoes to show support for the boxer. The video uploaded on *YouTube* on 19th February, 2016 shows supporters of Manny Pacquiao burning Nike shoes. The video nicknamed "*Nike Burn your Sole not my soul*" shows a crowd of supporters shouting that they support Manny Pacquiao. A man then adds that they don't hate LGBT people but hate their agenda. The video message seems to echo what Manny Pacquiao said when he posted his apology on Facebook and Twitter account (Ballano, 2016; Cebu Youth Fest, 2016; Nike Burn My Sole not my Soul, 2016).

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to find out whether Manny Pacquiao applied the Image Restoration Theory after the dispute.

The objectives of the study were:

To determine whether Manny Pacquiao applied Image Restoration Theory after the incident

To determine which Image Restoration strategies did Manny Pacquiao use after the incident

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Celebrity Branding

Celebrities symbolize achievement, success, reputation and high recognition in society; furthermore, the celebrity endorses the image of the brand. Celebrity branding has many advantages that are likely to increase sales apart from maintaining the brand image. Over the years, Nike has used several of the most famous and talented sport people of the world: Roger Federer, Rafael Nadal and the Williams sisters among others (Rubini, 2010). Such celebrities enhance both company image and brand attitude because they create a culture around Nike products that consumers cannot resist. According to Rubini (2010) they become 'walking advertisements' because they have to wear company products as well as use them whenever in public. The reason for celebrity endorsement is to increase sales as well as creating brand loyalty (Lofgren & Li, 2010).

However, celebrity image and his/her public reputation are also crucial for a brand, as its image reflects the chosen celebrity. The Tiger Woods love affair and Maria Sharapova's recent doping case have seen their sponsorship deals withdrawn or reduced by sponsoring companies.

2.2 Nike Company and Manny Pacquiao

Nike was founded in 1950 (Jones, 2006). Since then, Nike has built a strong brand in the shoes industry. The process to build, manage a strong and successful brand is a result of a sequence of actions and activities across the marketing mix leading to the brand image that Nike has currently (Blythe, 2006). In order to maintain the brand image, organizations including Nike make use of celebrity branding. Celebrity branding and endorsement make use of famous people that it becomes hard for the consumer to think about the brand without the celebrity (Rubini, 2010). By selecting Manny Pacquiao, Nike knew that he would be more than a billboard and a walking advertisement for Nike's products (Rovell, 2016; Rubini, 2016). According to Jay (2016) Nike's sponsorship strategy is to associate itself with famous athletes in order to make sales. Therefore, the abhorrent remarks were risky for Nike considering the amount of Manny Pacquiao's merchandise that they sale as a result of sponsoring him. The remarks were ill timed considering that Nike had already sponsored the fight with Timothy Bradley in June, 2016 and were about to launch Nike trainer sneakers associated with Manny Pacquiao (Jay, 2016).

2.3 Image Restoration Theory

Image Restoration Theory identifies a typology of 5 major communication strategies that can be used to restore image and reputation when an individual or organization's image is threatened or is in crisis (Benoit & Prang, 2008 as cited in Kessadayurat, 2011). The theory assumes that communication is a goal-directed activity, and that maintaining a positive reputation for an individual or an organization is one of the fundamental goals of this communication. When an individual's image is threatened, Benoit claims, the main goal of communication is restoring or defending one's reputation. The theory states that two components must be present in a given attack to the image of an individual or organization: firstly, the accused is held responsible for an action and secondly, the act is considered offensive (Benoit, 1995). In addition, the theory adds that perception is very important in image restoration because the individual or organization must perceive that he or it is at fault. After accepting the wrongful act, then only can communication strategies be selected based upon credibility, audience perceptions, and the degree of offensiveness (Benoit, 1995; Kessadayurat, 2011).

The 5 communication strategies are: denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing the offensiveness of the act, corrective action and mortification (Benoit, 1995; Benoit & Prang, 2008 as cited in Kessadayurat, 2011).

Denial strategy: this is whereby the organization or individual attempts to eliminate any connection between the organization and the threat by claiming that there is no threat to image and offers a simple denial that it did not perform the act in question or shifts the blame to another person.

Evasion of responsibility: this is whereby the organization or an individual attempts to manipulate public perception and renounce responsibility for their actions. The actions are aimed at reducing responsibility for the crisis by claiming that it was either forced into the crisis by another culprit and its inability to prevent the image problem. Accordingly, there are four ways to evade responsibility: *Provocation* (the accused restores image in the audience by saying that he/she was provoked into doing the offensive act), *defeasibility* (the accused claims that lack of information and factors that were beyond his/her control made him/her do the wrongful act), *accidents* (the accused claims that he/she cannot be held responsible because it was an accident) and *motives or intentions* (the accused evades responsibility of the wrongful act by saying that he had good intentions but ended up doing something evil Kessadayurat, 2011).

The third strategy is **reducing the offensiveness:** this is whereby an individual or organization tries to reduce perceived damage caused by the crisis. The individual emphasizes the good qualities by creating a more complete perspective with which the individual should be evaluated. An individual or organization can reduce offensiveness through strategies such as: *bolstering* (the accused uses his good traits or deeds in the past in the hope that it will lessen the current mistakes), *minimization* (the accused tries to rationalize that the mistake made is not as bad as thought by the audience therefore restoring the image), *differentiation* (the accused compares his mistake to other worse mistakes therefore lessening the offensiveness), *transcendence* (the accused justifies the mistake in a broader positive context that the audience feels it was justified as it was unusual act), *attacking one's accuser* (the accused diverts attention by attacking the accuser) and *compensation* (the accused pays, in form of money, services or goods, the victim to restore his image Benoit, Blaney & Brazeal, 2001 as cited in Kessadayurat, 2011).

Fourthly, **corrective action:** the organization or individual implements steps to repair the image and prevent a repeat of the same by taking corrective measures. Lastly, **mortification strategy:** this is where the offender takes full responsibility for the wrongful act, apologizes and asks for forgiveness (Kessadayurat, 2011).

As earlier stated, Image Restoration Theory assumes that communication is goal directed and maintaining a positive public image is one of the essential goals. Therefore, for the accused to repair and or restore a favourable public image towards the audience then communication strategies should be used. After a threat to public image, organizations or individuals should carefully choose which communication strategy to use based on credibility, the audience and offensiveness of the wrongful act (Ferguson, Wallace & Chandler, 2012; Kessadayurat, 2011; King III, 2006).

2.4 Conceptual Framework

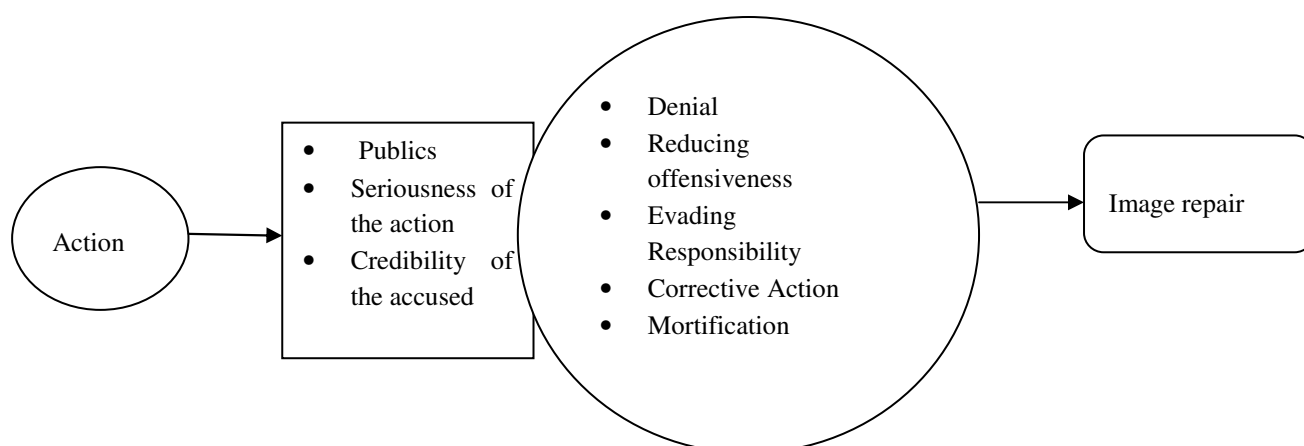


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Figure 1) shows that after an offensive action by an individual or an organization, there is need to consider the publics or the audience perception towards the offense committed. The publics' perception is important when deciding which communication strategy to use in designing the messages because of the threat posed to the victim's image. The framework also shows that the seriousness of the action determines which communication strategy to use in repairing the accused image. The severity of the action determines whether to use one or a number of the communication strategies to complement each other. Another variable to consider before deciding the communication strategy to use is the credibility of the accused. The figure shows

that the reputation of the offender is also important before deciding which communication strategy to use. According to figure 1, there is a very close connection between the intervening variables that are publics, seriousness of the action and credibility of the accused. The set of intervening variables affect the each other in a way that the offender should careful consider each one of them in order to repair or restore image.

2.5 Empirical Literature

King III (2006) carried out a study using Image Restoration Theory. This study sought to examine the various response strategies an organization employed after a whistle-blowing incident. He used the whistle-blowing case of Brown and Williamson Tobacco Company, the study sought to examine the different image restoration strategies the organization (Brown and Williamson) used in responding to the allegations of wrongdoing made by the whistle-blower, Dr. Jeffrey Wigand. The whistle blower accused Brown and Williamson Tobacco Company of organizational misconduct and inappropriate behavior by senior officials in their manufacturing of tobacco products. King III (2006) found out that the following strategies were used; attacking the accuser, denial strategy, minimization strategy and victimization strategy. The study concluded that in case of a threat to image of an organization or individual then there is need to carefully think about the strategy to use. The study also concluded that an organization that uses defensive strategies when the allegations are true risk its own reputation. Roberts (2006) conducted a content analysis of media releases and stories produced by the U.S. Air Force regarding a series of sexual assaults at the Air Force Academy in 2002. The study found out that the most prevalent image restoration tactics the military used were: corrective action (75%), bolstering (65%), defeasibility (40%) and (20%) mortification. The study also found out that the tactics least used were: shifting the blame (10%), denial (5%), provocation (5%) and transcendence (5%).

Jung, Graeff, & Shim, (2011) On October 29 of 2007, a whistle-blower, Kim Yongchul, a former director of Samsung's legal department (1997~2004), urged an investigation into Samsung's suspected bribery activities, including charges of bribery. The three main accusations against Samsung were: the creation of Samsung's alleged slush fund, the bribery of prosecutors and other government officials, and the illicit transfer of managerial rights to Lee Jae-yong, son of the current Samsung chairman Lee Kun-hee (Kim, 2007 as cited in Jung et al., 2011). The study wanted to found out the image restoration strategies that Samsung used in responding to the allegations of wrongdoing made by a whistler-blower. Therefore, Jung et al. (2011) reviewed official comments and documents released by Samsung. Official 25-page news released by Samsung and news reports on Samsung's responses to the allegations was collected. News reports were collected through the LexisNexis Academic. The study found that the Samsung used defensive strategies that were: transcendence, denial, attack the accuser, bolstering, in order to protect its image. The study concluded that the transcendence image restoration strategy was the most effective one and successfully made the South Korean public to believe that a few misconducts done by Samsung was justifiable to safeguard the national economy from severe global economic competitions (Jung et al., 2011).

Chimbarange, Mukenge and Kombe in 2013 carried out a study on the image restoration strategies that were used by prime minister Morgan Tsvangirai after a divorcing his wife Lorcadia Karimatsenga. The study used the apology letter from the prime minister to the Zimbabwean publics. By using content analysis, the study was able to identify the strategies that Morgan Tsvangirai used and how effective they were. The study found out that Tsvangirai image repairs came a bit late but they helped him repair his image. By analyzing sentences, words and phrases used in the letter, the study concluded that Morgan Tsvangirai used all the five typologies of image repair theory. The strategies were: denial, mortification, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness and corrective action (Chimbarange et al., 2013).

3.0 Methodology

The study used content analysis method in analyzing the strategies that both Manny Pacquiao and Nike used. Content analysis allows for carefully examination of media content messages. The study used Manny Pacquiao's statement posted on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts.

The units of analysis in the study were words, phrases, sentences and images used after Manny Pacquiao made the derogatory comments targeted at LGBT. A coding sheet with all the Image restoration strategies was used to analyze the apology by Manny Pacquiao's. The coding sheet was adapted from Glen F. Roberts' (University of South Florida) coding sheet. To ensure reliability of coding analysis, two coders were used and they had to assign a value of 1 if the strategy was used and 2 if the strategy was not used. The researcher and a trained coder analyzed the sentences, words and phrases used in the statements. The trained coder was a PhD student at University of Nairobi, Kenya (Mr. Anthony Mungai). The exercise was discussed, repeated to further ensure consistency and accuracy of the research findings as supported by Prasad, Das, & Bhaskaran, 2008.

To test for inter-coder reliability Cohen's Kappa was used as a guide. Cohen's Kappa is suitable for testing inter-coder reliability because it takes into account the agreement between coders by subtracting out the agreement due to chance. Agreement indicates the percentage of matches between coders on the values assigned to each

variable (McHugh, 2012; Swert, 2012).

There is no clear cut agreement on what constitutes excellent levels of agreement between coders. However, a common criterion is less than 0% means there is no agreement, 0-20% poor, 20-40% fair, 40-60% moderate, 60-80% good, above 80% is very good (McHugh, 2012; Swert, 2012). The researcher used Microsoft Excel 2007 to calculate percentage of coders' agreement and not SPSS.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Inter-coder statistics

Table I. Coders' sheet

Strategy	Intentions	Bolstering	Differentiation	Transcendence	Mortification	Minimization
Coder A	1	1	1	1	1	2
Coder B	1	2	2	1	1	2

Strategy	Denial	Shifting Blame	Provocation	Defeasibility	Accident	Corrective Action	Compensation	Attack Accuser
Coder A	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Coder B	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2

Coder A	Coder B	
1	1	
1	2	
1	2	
1	1	
1	1	
2	2	
2	2	
2	2	
2	2	
2	2	
2	2	
2	2	
2	1	
2	2	
2	2	
Total	14	
Agreement	11	78.57%
Disagreement	3	21.43%

Figure 2: Excel Worksheet on Inter-rater reliability

$$\text{Cohen's Kappa } k = \frac{n_a - n_s}{n - n_s}$$

Where n = number of subjects

n_s = number of agreement due to chance

n_a = number of agreements

Percentage of agreement due to chance

$$\text{Coder A } \frac{5}{14} \times 100 = 35.71\%$$

$$\text{Coder B } \frac{4}{14} \times 100 = 28.57\%$$

$$\text{Total number of agreement due to chance} = \frac{35.71}{100} \times \frac{28.57}{100} \times 100 = 10.20\%$$

Number of cases due to chances therefore was $\frac{10.20}{100} \times 14 = 1.43$ cases

Cohen's Kappa $k = \frac{n_a - n_s}{n - n_s}$

$$\frac{11 - 1.43}{14 - 1.43} = \frac{9.57}{12.57}$$

$k = .76$

Therefore, the inter-rater reliability is satisfactory.

4.2 Discussion

According to Figure 2, the two coders had 78.57% coder agreement, which was $k = .76$. According to Cohen, Kappa statistic should be interpreted as (McHugh, 2012)

≤ 0 as - no agreement

.01 - .20 – slight agreement

.21 - .40 – fair agreement

.41 - .60 – moderate agreement

.61 - .80 – substantial/good agreement

.81 – 1.00 almost perfect agreement

Coders' disagreement occurred on three variables that were corrective action which was mistaken by the second coder as part of mortification. But after further discussion, it was agreed that Manny did not correct the action. Secondly, the coders agreed after discussion and consultation that bolstering was used because Manny heavily quoted from the Bible. Therefore, the Bible was symbolically used to stress on his devotion to Christian values. The same was also the case for differentiation strategy. He placed his comments within what the Bible says about other sins such as idolaters and adulterers.

The study found out that Manny Pacquiao used Image Restoration Theory after making the abhorrent comments against LGBT. This could have been done consciously or unconsciously. Manny employed a combination of Image Restoration strategies when repairing his image. Many scholars of image restoration advocate the use of several strategies to ensure effectiveness of repairing someone's image.

Manny Pacquiao used **intentions** as a strategy. This was evident when he said he was against same sex marriage because of what the Bible says. Therefore, the intention was to say what the Bible says on the subject of sexual immorality. The mention of the Bible, God and quotation of Bible verses in his apology was clearly intended to give the religiosity of his apology. Therefore, his intentions were likely to be taken as religious views rather than attack on LGBT.

Another strategy he used was **bolstering**. Again Manny Pacquiao was unable to separate religion (Christianity) when he apologized. Bolstering is evident when he said that the truth from the Bible is what changed him from the old ways. This showed that he had done good deeds in the past and he should not be condemned because of LGBT statement. Bolstering could also be seen when he said that God bless you and he was praying for them. By heavily using the Bible as his background, Manny Pacquiao managed to bolster about his traits and deeds entrenched in Christian values.

Thirdly, Pacquiao used **differentiation and transcendence** when he mentioned mistakes such as adultery, idolatry and sexually immoral people. This an image repairing strategy that he used by mentioning other evil behaviours in the Bible in relation to what he had said about LGBT community. This is manipulatively done by quoting from the

Bible. According to Blaney and Benoit (2001) some apologies are given the religious connotations for the public to accept the apology. This strategy allowed the public to compare the comments he made from a religious point of view rather than condemnation thereby manipulating the audience's perception so that they can look at from a religious perspective.

The last strategy that Pacquiao used was **mortification**. He accepted the mistake, apologized and asked for forgiveness.

"I'm sorry for hurting people by comparing homosexuals to animals. Please forgive me for those I've hurt.

The above statement clearly showed acceptance of the offence and apologetically asked for forgiveness for those he had hurt with his comments. As supported by Holtzhausen & Roberts (n.d.) mortification is the most effective method to use when repairing image.

4.3 Conclusion

The study concluded that Manny Pacquiao used some image restoration strategies after making the derogatory remarks against the LGBT. The strategies were: mortification, differentiation, transcendence bolstering and intentions. By using several strategies Pacquiao was able to repair his image.

Pacquiao did not use defensive strategies such as denial, provocation, shifting blame defeasibility among others to repair his image. Using defensive strategies would not have worked because of the channel used to commit the offense. In addition defensive strategies were likely to have failed considering that Pacquiao was caught live on TV5 commenting on the LGBT. As supported by Jung (et al., 2011) use of defensive strategies is not viable if the accused is guilty.

The most evident strategy that Pacquiao used was mortification. He accepted to have made the offense and asked for forgiveness. By openly referring to the Bible, Pacquiao's apology had religious backing therefore invoked moral consideration in the target audience. Mortification was the most effective strategy used by Pacquiao and it is always considered as effective when the accused knows that he /she is guilty.

4.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that Pacquiao would have defined his publics first before repairing his image. According to the conceptual framework (figure 1) Pacquiao should have considered the various publics, the seriousness of his comments and his credibility. When asking for forgiveness, Pacquiao would have clearly targeted his first message at Nike Company, second message at LGBT community and the third one to the other publics. The use of the Bible to support his apology was well thought out and can be used in other image restoration occasion. The quotes from the Bible and the Nike Company T-shirts he wore when giving his statement were symbols of apology in themselves.

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Appendix A: Coding Sheet

Go through Manny Pacquiao’s apology statement and carefully read the content. Please assign 1 if **used** and 2 if **not used**. Please note that you are checking only for an appearance of the tactics, not the number of times it appears in the apology.

	STRATEGY	Used = 1	Not used = 2	Evidence (sentences, words, phrases)
1	Denial (Manny denied having said it)			
2	Shifting blame (Manny blamed others)			
3	Provocation (I was provoked into saying it)			
4	Defeasibility (Manny lacked information or ability)			
5	Accident (I (Manny) did it by mistake)			
6	Intentions (I (Manny) had good intentions when saying it)			
7	Bolstering (Manny stressed on his good traits and deeds)			
8	Minimization (What I (Manny) said is not as bad as thought)			
9	Differentiation (Manny compared what he said to other mistakes)			
10	Transcendence (Manny justifies the mistake in a wider context)			
11	Attack Accuser (Manny attacks accuser or the offended)			
12	Compensation (Manny pays the accuser or the offended)			
13	Corrective Action (Manny corrects the action)			
14	Mortification (Manny accepts, apologizes and asks for forgiveness)			