

Handling Communication Crises in Media Organization the Case of Africa Independent Television

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ABSTRACT

Organizational communication to day, has become far more complex and varied. It is more crucial to overall organizational functioning and success. Therefore effective communication is the backbone of to days modern organizations. A crises is an unexpected and detrimental situation or event which crises communication can play a significant role in transforming the unexpected into the anticipated. This study investigates and evaluates the handling of communication crises in a media organization, using Africa Independent Television (AIT) as a case study. As an evaluative and prescriptive study, the research used documentary method to generate data.

The study found out that effective crises management can minimize the damage and allow an organization to emerge stronger than before. The study concludes that management should maximize crises preparedness so as to prevent crises induced damage.

INTRODUCTION

Managers traditionally spend the majority of their time communicating in one form or another (meetings, face-to-face discussions, memos, letters, emails, reports, etc.). Today, however, more and more employees find that an important part of their work is communication, especially now that service workers outnumber production workers and research as well as production processes emphasize greater collaboration and teamwork among workers in different functional groups. Moreover, a sea-change in communication technologies has contributed to the transformation of both work and organizational structure. For these reasons, communication practices and technologies have become more important in all organizations.(cheney et al, 2004)

According to cheney et al, (2004) Organizational communication may be viewed more profitably as balancing creativity and constraint, as it is never entirely constrained or creative. The definition of organizational communication as balancing creativity and constraint focuses on how individuals use communication to work out the tension between working within the constraints of pre-existing organizational structures and promoting change and creativity.

The study of organizational communication recognizes that communication in organizations goes far beyond training managers to be effective speakers and to have good interpersonal communication skills. Moreover, it recognizes that all organizations, not just business organizations, have communication needs and challenges.

Desanctis et al (1999) say that the field of organizational communication is highly diverse and fragmented. It spans communication at the micro, and macro levels; formal and informal communications; and internal organizational communication practices (newsletters, presentations, strategic communications, work direction, performance reviews, meetings etc) as well as externally directed communications (public, media, inter-organizational). Also included are innovation, organizational learning, knowledge -management, conflict management, diversity, and communication technologies.

There are five major areas that organizational communication scholars study: (1) leadership, (2) teams, (3) communication networks, (4) organizational culture, and (5) organizational learning.

All these must be taken into consideration when managing an organisation and this paper will take a look at the Africa Independent Television structure and how communication crisis has been managed in such organisation.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

The aim of this paper is to study communication crisis in an organisation with emphasis on Africa Independent Television (AIT).

Objectives

- Identifying the nature of organisational communication that exist in the case study
- Identifying organisational crisis
- Discussing the case study
- Suggesting ways of managing crisis

NATURE OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

In addition to its fragmented nature, organizational communication, perhaps more than any other aspect of organizational theory and practice, has been subject to dramatic change. Before 1920, communication in small organizations was largely informal. As organizations increased in size, formal top-down communication became the main concern of organizational managers. (Drenth, et al 1998; Foehrenbach, et al, 1982; Frank, 1984)

Organizational communication in today's organizations has not only become far more complex and varied but more important to overall organizational functioning and success. While research used to focus on understanding how organizational communication varied by organizational type and structure, the emphasis has increasingly turned to understanding how new communication technologies and capabilities can help bring about new and more effective organizational forms and processes.

HISTORICAL TRENDS AND THE INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Views of organizational communication can be categorized as those that view organizational communication as one aspect of an organization versus those that see it as the underlying basis of the organization itself. (Desanctis, et al, 1999, Gibson et al, 1991)

In many ways, organizations have evolved in directions that make the latter view more appropriate. Changes confronting organizations and the associated changes in organizational forms have made organizational communication increasingly important to overall organizational functioning. (Neher, 1997)

The followings are reasons why communication is important in an organisation;

- Work is more complex and requires greater coordination and interaction among workers
- The pace of work is faster
- Workers are more distributed
- Simultaneous, distributed work processes are more common
- Knowledge and innovation are more critical to an organization's competitive advantage
- Communication technologies and networks are increasingly essential to an organization's structure and strategy.

Communication is not only an essential aspect of these recent organizational changes, but effective communication can be seen as the foundation of modern organizations. (Myers et al, 1982)

Managers, consultants, and researchers have traditionally focused on problems of financial performance and growth, but have paid little heed to the effective management of corporate crises. The negative effects of organizational and industrial activities have been treated as minor "externalities" of production. It can be argued that until recently, it was unnecessary to focus on such crises.

ORGANISATIONAL CRISIS

Communication is viewed as the pivotal process in the creation and maintenance of organization, and its role is important at every stage, from incubation to avoidance, crisis management, and recovery.

A crisis is an unexpected and detrimental situation or event. Crisis communication can play a significant role by transforming the unexpected into the anticipated.

Crisis events are increasingly common. Their impacts are greater and they are more widely reported in the media. They often symbolize tragedy and loss, but they are also the precipitating factors in radical, rapid, and frequently positive social change.

An organizational crisis is anything which could:

- Threaten a major product line, business unit
- Damage an organization's financial performance
- Harm the health and well being of consumers, employees, surrounding communities, or the environment
- Destroy the public's trust in an organization, its reputation and image

Taking a broad view of organizational crisis, the organization can be anything from a company to a federal bureaucracy or society. Organizational crisis is presented as a natural stage in organizational evolution, creating not only stress and threats but also opportunities for growth and development. (Redding, 1985, Pearce, 1994)

Understanding the complex dynamics of these powerful events is imperative for both researchers and managers.

Researchers, crisis managers, and communications managers always consider Crisis in communication as a field considered a sub-specialty of the public relations profession that is designed to protect and defend an individual, company, or organization facing a public challenge to its reputation. Crisis communication professionals preach that an organization's reputation is often its most valuable asset. When that reputation comes under attack, protecting and defending it becomes the highest priority.

Crisis communication is a part of larger process referred to as crisis management though it may well be a major tool of handling a crisis situation in government, organization or business.

The aim of crisis communication in this context is to assist organizations to achieve continuity of critical business processes and information flows under crisis, disaster or event driven circumstances.

Responding quickly, efficiently, effectively and in a premeditated way are the primary objectives of an effective crisis communication strategy and/or solution. (Richmond et al, 1992)

Harnessing technology and people to ensure a rapid and co-ordinated response to a range of potentially crippling scenarios distinguishes a well thought out and executed plan from a poorly or ill-considered one. The inherent lag time in marshalling responses to a crisis can result in considerable losses to company revenues, reputation as well as substantially impacting on costs. (Lucas, 1996, Johansen, 1984)

Effective crisis communication strategies will typically consider achieving most, if not all, of the following objectives:

- Maintain connectivity
- Be readily accessible to the news media -
- Show empathy for the people involved
- Allow distributed access
- Streamline communication processes
- Maintain information security
- Ensure uninterrupted audit trails
- Deliver high volume communications
- Support multi-channel communications
- Remove dependencies on paper based processes

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF AFRICA INDEPENDENT TELEVISION (AIT)

Africa Independent Television is a private media outfit of DAAR Communications Plc with its headquarter based in Abuja, Nigeria's capital with various network stations throughout the country and beyond.

DAAR Communications was incorporated in Nigeria in August 1998. It boasts of a successful background in the closely related fields of printing and publishing. DAAR launched its broadcast services in 1994 with the promotion of Nigeria's first private independent radio station Raypower 100.5 FM.

A second channel Raypower 2 106.5FM commenced formal operation in April 1999. Before then, DAAR Communications had launched a 24 hours global Television service with the call sign Africa Independent Television (AIT) with thematic philosophy that is geared towards the promotion of Africa values and traditions of black people across the world.

In the last quarter of 1999, DAAR Communications launched into the information super highway with the commencement of DAAR broadband Internet Services with capacity for invoice, internet access, video conferencing, data, telephony and other multi-media capabilities. DAAR

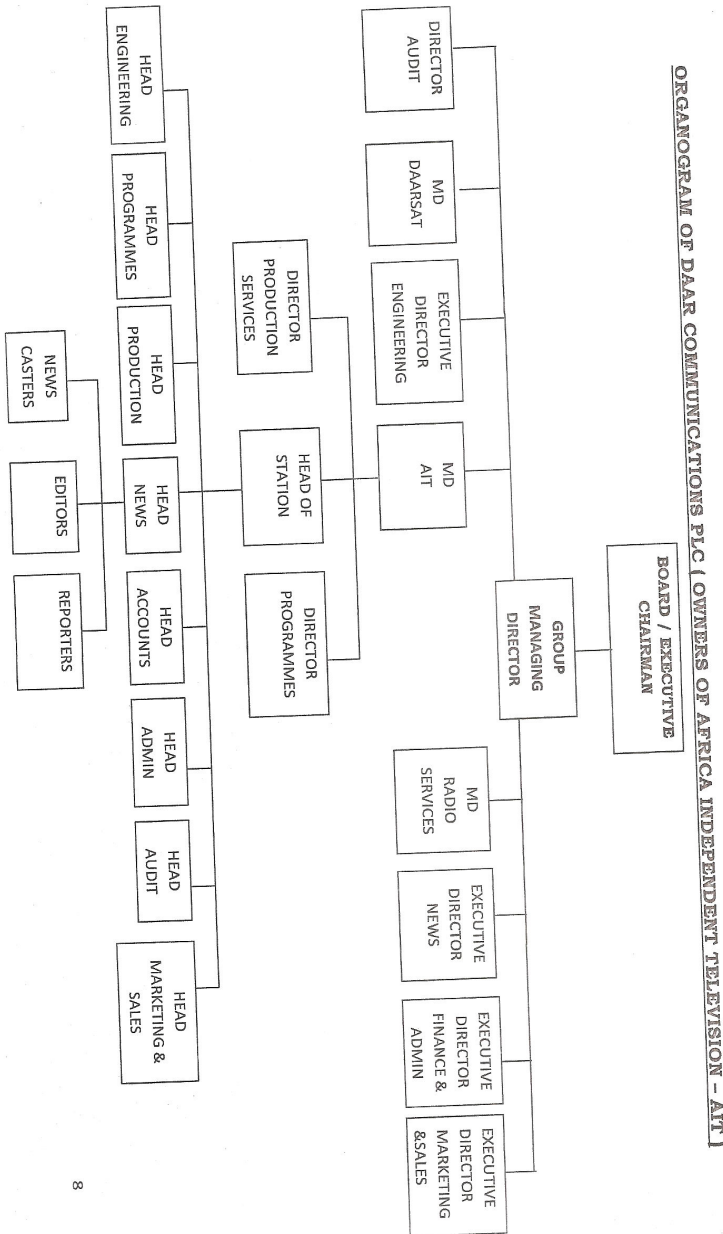
Internet Services completes the circle of DAAR Communications Plc communications convergence strategy. DAAR Communications Plc with has staff of over 1000 people in Africa, Europe and the United States.

In line with the global trend of the new information age which has achieved a convergence of broadcasting and telecommunications, DAAR Communications has fully installed and integrated equipment using its international satellite gateway system capable of handling voice, data and video telecommunications to virtually every country in the world.

In appreciation of the fact that the synergistic combination of computer, telephone, fibre-optic, and video will open a new chapter in revenue generation across multi-industry frontiers in the twenty-first century, DAAR Communications Plc has positioned itself by installing equipment and facilities capable of handling voice, Data and video telecommunications globally.

The management structure of AIT in one way or the other has experienced its organisational crisis which was basically generated from communication lapses.

Below is The Organogram of DAAR Communications Plc (Owners Of Africa Independent Television — AIT)



CRISIS IN COMMUNICATION: THE AFRICA INDEPENDENT TELEVISION

EXAMPLE

At a point in time (during the evolvement of the station in the early 2000), salaries were being owed for upward of six months. As if that was not enough, there was a rumoured plan by management to slash salaries by between 5% and 15%. This angered staff who protested almost violently.

Investigations later have revealed that although there were series of management meetings which addressed how to diffuse tension amongst the staff that were agitating for unpaid salaries, nothing was done by the relevant departments to communicate management decisions to staff through notices.

General staff meetings which would have availed top-down/bottom-up interactions were also absent, perhaps for the fear that they may turn violent.

Another source has it that an aggrieved management staff whom the lack of salary also affected had confided a salary-cut to another non-management staff. From this point, there were flurry of rumours over the issues which were happening simultaneously.

As a result, management was given a deadline to pay up or face a total shutdown. It could not meet the ultimatum which led to a shut down for some days.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS

Crisis management is a critical organizational function. Failure can result in serious harm to stakeholders, losses for an organization, or end its very existence. Public relations practitioners are an integral part of crisis management teams. So a set of best practices and lessons gleaned from our knowledge of crisis management would be a very useful resource for those in public relations. (ROberts et al, 1974) Volumes have been written about crisis management by both practitioners and researchers from many different disciplines making it a challenge to synthesize what we know about crisis management and public relations' place in that knowledge base. The best place to start this effort is by defining critical concepts. (Roger et al,1952)

A crisis is defined here as a significant threat to operations that can have negative consequences if not handled properly. In crisis management, the threat is the potential damage a crisis can inflict on an organization, its stakeholders, and an industry. A crisis can create three related threats: (1) public safety, (2) financial loss, and (3) reputation loss. Some crises, such as industrial accidents and product harm, can result in injuries and even loss of lives. Crises can create financial loss by disrupting operations, creating a loss of market share/purchase intentions, or spawning lawsuits related to the crisis. All crises threaten to tarnish an organization's reputation. A crisis reflects poorly on an organization and will damage a reputation to some degree. Clearly these three threats are interrelated. Injuries or deaths will result in financial and reputation loss while reputations have a financial impact on organizations. (Seeger, et al, 1998)

Effective crisis management handles the threats sequentially. The primary concern in a crisis has to be public safety. A failure to address public safety intensifies the damage from a crisis. Reputation and financial concerns are considered after public safety has been remedied. Ultimately, crisis management is designed to protect an organization and its stakeholders from threats and/or reduce the impact felt by threats. (Tucker, et al 1996)

Crisis management is a process designed to prevent or lessen the damage a crisis can inflict on an organization and its stakeholders. As a process, crisis management is not just one thing. Crisis management can be divided into three phases: (1) pre-crisis, (2) crisis response, and (3) post-crisis. The pre-crisis phase is concerned with prevention and preparation. The crisis response phase is when management must actually respond to a crisis. The post-crisis phase looks for ways to better prepare for the next crisis and fulfils commitments made during the crisis phase including follow-up formation. The tri-part view of crisis management sees as the framework for this entry. (Seeger, et al, 1998)

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

An organization may create a separate web site for the crisis or designate a section of its current web site for the crisis. Research finds that having a crisis web site is a best practice for using an internet during a crisis. The site should be designed prior to the crisis. This requires the crisis team to anticipate the types of crises an organization will face and the types of information needed for the web site. For instances, any organization that makes consumer goods is likely to have a product harm crisis that will require a recall. The value of a crisis web site is to help people identify if their product is part of the recall and how the recall will be handled. Stakeholders, including the news media, will turn to the Internet during a crisis. Crisis managers should utilize some form of web-based response or risk appearing to be ineffective. (kiesler (1986)

Of course not placing information on the web site can be strategic. An organization may not want to publicize the crisis by placing information about it on the web site. This assumes the crisis is very small and that stakeholders are unlikely to hear about it from another source. In today's traditional and online media environment, that is a misguided if not dangerous assumption. Scholars emphasize that a web site is another means for an organization to present its side of the story and not using it creates a risk of losing how the crisis story is told.

Intranet sites can also be used during a crisis. Intranet sites limit access, typically to employees only though some will include suppliers and customers. Intranet sites provide direct access to specific stakeholders so long as those stakeholders have access to the Intranet. (Lucas, 1996)

The communication value of an Intranet site is increased when used in conjunction with mass notification systems designed to reach employees and other key stakeholders. With a mass notification system, contact information (phones numbers, e-mail, etc.) are programmed in prior to a crisis. Contacts can be any group that can be affected by the crisis including employees, customers, and community members living near a facility. Crisis managers can enter short messages into the system then tell the mass notification system who should receive which messages and which channel or channels to use for the delivery. The mass notification system provides a mechanism for people to respond to messages as well. The response feature is critical when crisis managers want to verify that the target has received the message. (Wilson, 1992)

ORGANISATIONAL CRISES AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

To achieve communication during crises, organisations need to have a plan through anticipation, respond immediately to questions, avoid talking too much and accept responsibility. Correcting misinformation

Discouraging rumours and correcting misinformation is another strategy towards managing a crisis. Lack of response is almost the same as implied consent. When something incorrect is printed or said, immediate action should be taken to point out the error and ask for correction.

Otherwise, the media involved will only assume that what has been written or said is correct. One publication could print a damaging story with incorrect information.

Another publication could assume the information was and is correct and refer to it in a follow-up article. When repeated over and over, fiction and errors become facts. In a matter of seconds, the Internet can spread misinformation or rumours around the world. This is why it is so important to have open lines of communication with all employees, customers, vendors, shareholders and friends. You want to control your message as best as you possibly can but you cannot control what others say. Just as there are clipping services that read newspapers and magazines for any mention of a company or organisation, and services that monitor radio and television programmes, there are monitoring services that can be retained that regularly check the Internet for information.

Adversaries, disgruntled employees and former employees, and whistleblowers can leak confidential information, misinformation or outright lies that are republished on websites, message boards or blogs, and eventually find their way into mainstream media.

According to communication experts, companies must protect their corporate reputation by refuting any harmful rumour that is picking up momentum on the Internet. Ignoring the spread of a detrimental rumour is dangerous. The correct strategic response is to neutralise the attack with a factual response.

Success in crisis management depends largely on how quickly and accurately your organisation communicates with its stakeholders. Stakeholders have something at risk, and therefore something to gain or lose as a result of your organisation's activity. (Witherspoon, 1997)

The success of any business or organization depends largely on how effectively the members communicate.

Effective communication involves:

1. Listening: Good listening skills and showing a genuine interest are attributes of a successful manager. Employers who actively listen to employees inquires and complaints are more able to solve problems and gain their loyalty.
2. Use Names: When meeting people make sure you hear the persons name and use it right away so you will remember it. If you are not sure what the person said, ask him/her to repeat it.
3. Get to the Point: Show value for people's time by being as concise as possible when giving information. Do not give lengthy, unnecessary details and don't make excuses for your mistakes. Answer the question and give important information only.
4. Let Others Talk: Don't be a person who does all the talking. What you are saying may be of interest to you only. Keep the other person in mind, giving him/her a chance to be a part of the conversation. Look for signals that you may be boring your listener and ask questions to involve them in the conversation.

5. Non-verbal Language: Nine-five percent of communication is nonverbal, which includes: eye movement, tone of voice, posture, facial expressions and hand gestures. When talking to someone keeping eye contact without staring shows a sense of confidence. Be aware of nonverbal communication and keep it consistent with your message.

6. Vocal Cues: Do not use an excessive amount of 'filler' words (sayings or words repeated often), sounds such as "uh, urn" or use lengthy

pauses during conversation. The listener will lose interest in what you are saying and will become bored.

7. Create an Atmosphere of Openness: To establish a good relationship with customers and create a comfortable atmosphere be attentive to the number of interruptions. Give your customer/acquaintance your undivided attention by not keeping physical barriers (such as desks) between you. Avoid trying to communicate in a busy area and keep your focus on the listener. (White et al 1996)

EFFECTIVE EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION IN TIMES OF CRISIS

Crises for a company can take many forms. But whether they are accidental, financial, legal, or otherwise, there is one thing that all affected companies in common: a critical need for a successful management and operational response as well as effective communication with both external and internal stakeholders

Over the past two decades a growing number of companies have developed and critically improved their customized approaches to communicating with external stakeholders in the event of a crisis. However, far too many companies still either do not realize or fail to act upon the fact that effective employee communication is also crucial to managing organisational crises. (Jablin 1980, Gibson, 1985)

Regardless of a company's size, reputation or industry, preparing for effective employee communication in times of crisis inevitably calls for putting the proper organizational structure and processes in place before a crisis hits. This includes assigning responsibilities, training employees and establishing instruments which enable seamless vertical (top-down as well as bottom-up) and horizontal employee communication, even in the face of extreme stress.

Only if the systematic planning, implementation and evaluation of a company's internal crisis communication are conducted company-wide and on an ongoing basis, will management be able to rely on this valuable tool for minimizing crisis-related damage as well as seizing any opportunities the crisis itself may present. (Cronen, 1991, Conrad, 1994)

Following are the practical tips used by managers at all levels of the corporate hierarchy in African Independent Television to help ensure effective employee communication during a crisis. Their implementation plays an important role in actively preserving and even enhancing the company's reputation and competitiveness.

1. Recognizing employees as a key stakeholder group with which to communicate

Corporate crises cause immense pressure and uncertainty for any affected company and its employees. In order to prevent rumors, false information unfounded allegations all external as well as internal stakeholders have to be communicated with. Companies that underestimate the importance of effective employee communication during such a time often suffer significant economic damage as the result of, among other reasons, a lack of trust, low morale, and the subsequent loss of their most valuable asset, well-trained and dedicated employees.

Therefore the following questions should be addressed when a crisis occurs:

1. What is the desired outcome of the communication? [objective]
2. What will be communicated? [message]
3. Who will initiate the communication? [sender]
4. Which groups of employees (and management) will be communicated with? [recipient]
5. How and / or where is the communication going to happen? [channel / venue]
6. When will the communication take place? [timeline]

The following two questions must be addressed both during the crisis and as part of the post-crisis evaluation and crisis preparedness planning.

7. Was the communication objective met? [evaluation]
8. How can we do better? [optimizing]

Management also must understand (and prepare accordingly) that in a crisis situation it is necessary to increase the internal communication frequency since employees usually have a high demand for updated information as well as the desire to provide continuous feedback.

2. Conducting open, timely and truthful communication with your employees first

Especially in times of crisis only those employees who are being communicated with in an open, timely and truthful way are both able and willing to represent their company and actively support its goals inside and outside the organization.

Management battling a crisis also has to be aware that whenever possible internal communication should precede external communication. It is of particular importance not to have external information sources report negative crisis-related news previously unknown to the employees, as it may alienate employees and hinder the successful crisis response and recovery.

Engaging in an honest dialogue with as many employees as possible also fosters better understanding and employee support in regard to perhaps unpopular yet necessary steps management may need to take in order to overcome the crisis and secure the company's future.

3. Responding to crisis-related employee questions and concerns

Employees' questions and concerns should be anticipated, identified and responded to in an appropriate manner. As the employees' trust in management's ability to handle the crisis is vital, even those questions and concerns that may be of minor importance to management or come at an inconvenient time should be dealt with. This is especially true if employees or their loved ones have suffered any type of physical or other harm due to the company's wrongdoing. In cases where the company may be responsible for any harm to employees or their loved ones, it is usually beneficial to communicate regret and empathy as well as an explanation of the steps the company is taking to handle the situation.

This communication response, however, should not be based upon the views of management alone, but must take into account the perceptions, opinions and expectations within the different stakeholder groups. Of course, management also has to bear in mind any restrictions (legal or otherwise) on the dissemination of certain information relating to the crisis.

4. Empowering employees to function as communication allies

Employees have a vested interest in working with management to prevail over the crisis and many are eager to actively promote the company's positions internally as well as externally. Management should therefore guide employees in their effort to speak up for the company. Empowering employees to take charge in times of crisis creates valuable communication allies who not only reinforce core messages internally, but also carry them into the community.

The internal crisis communication should be conducted using established communication channels and venues in addition to those that may have been developed to manage specific crisis scenarios. Whichever method of internal crisis communication a company may choose, the more upfront management is about what is happening, the better informed and more entrusted employees feel.

In order to enable effective internal crisis communication between senior management and large numbers of employees, who may be located in different countries, today's leading corporations employ sophisticated communication channels, including customized Intranets, advanced Video Conferencing Technology and professionally produced Business TV. However, studies have repeatedly shown that face-to-face communication between supervisors and their direct subordinates remains a decisive tool in facilitating effective employee communication during a crisis and should thus not be ignored.

5. Ensuring message consistency and simultaneous communication

Effective external and internal crisis communication also depends upon the consistency of messages conveyed by the company and its employees. With the goal of coherent messages and simultaneous communication in mind, more and more companies implement a 'One-Voice-Policy' that only permits qualified employees who are electronically linked with senior management and with one another to function as company spokespersons.

Provided the company employs a functioning 'Message Development Process', the existence of a 'One-Voice-Policy' can be very beneficial in a crisis situation. A lot of companies are however having a difficult time making certain their 'One-Voice-Policy' is followed. One challenge to the 'One-Voice-Policy' is the natural tendency of employees to talk about stressful, work-related events with family and friends, perhaps expressing criticism of management's handling of the situation.

However, a much greater risk to the 'One-Voice-Policy' is the possibility that an employee, perhaps frustrated by a lack of information and rising concerns over job security, might voice a complaint to the news media. This move would not only sabotage the company's 'One-Voice-Policy', but may in fact jeopardize the entire crisis response.

Hence management must remain sensitive to employees' needs and remember that there are investigative journalists who gladly interview disgruntled employees in order to produce a more sellable story.

6. Enabling employee feedback through two-way communication Successful management of a crisis depends on communication as a means of (incident) notification as well as two-way crisis communication aimed at seeking feedback and engaging in a constructive dialogue.

In times of crisis employees appreciate and increasingly demand feedback options such as face-to-face communication and Intranet-based two-way communication. Providing feedback options is worth little, however, if the feedback is not taken seriously by management and incorporated into the decision-making.

- First, employee feedback allows management to track whether messages have reached the intended groups of employees and resulted in the desired behaviour.
- Second, employee feedback enables management to not only track employees' opinions, perceptions, and expectations, but also reveals what messages external stakeholders communicate to employees concerning the crisis.
- Third, and most importantly, employee feedback in times of crisis often contains valuable information and important suggestions for minimizing damage, seizing opportunities and preventing future crises.

7. Providing vital resources for maximizing crisis preparedness Ideally all company locations, levels of corporate hierarchy, business divisions and departments are involved in the systematic planning, implementation and evaluation of the company's crisis management. In this context complex tasks including the integration of external and internal crisis communication into the overall crisis management process and the implementation of a company-wide issues management system have to be performed. These and other essential crisis management-related assignments require resources of which a relatively small yet critically important portion should be dedicated to ensuring effective employee communication.

CONCLUSION

Crises are often unexpected because:

- cognitive limits: we can't foresee everything, and can attend to only a limited number of tasks, threats and priorities
- the events/trends we can and do foresee can often be mitigated and thus prevented from becoming crises.
- denial and other psychological responses provide protection for our emotions.

It is difficult to distill all that is known about crisis management into one, concise entry. We have tried to identify the best practices and lessons created by crisis management researchers and analysts. While crises begin as a negative/threat, effective crisis management can minimize the damage and in some cases allow an organization to emerge stronger than before the crisis. However, crises are not the ideal way to improve an organization. But no organization is immune from a crisis, so all must do their best to prepare for one.

Because corporate crises are part of the organizational life cycle, they can sooner or later happen to any company no matter how much emphasis management places on indispensable crisis prevention.

Hence the key to organizational survival lies in maximizing the company's crisis preparedness. If management does not possess sufficient theoretical knowledge and crisis communication experience, it is advisable to recruit external consultants, whose involvement helps to increase the company's crisis readiness as well as its ability to effectively respond to a crisis and recover from it quickly.

Only if management acknowledges the critical importance of maximizing crisis preparedness and actively promotes the corresponding mindset throughout the company, it will be possible to minimize crisis-induced damage and convert resulting organizational change into competitive advantages. As many corporations, unfortunately, have had to learn the hard way, effective employee communication plays an essential role in the successful management of crises and facilitates the necessary organizational change.

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