

***Ethical Breaches:
How PR Professionals Can Guide
Organizations in Response
to a Crisis***

PRSA Richmond Chapter

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We can learn from the Ancient Greeks

“Day by day, what you choose, what you think and what you do is who you become.”

Heraclitus (circa 535-475 BCE)

“We are what we repeatedly do.”

Aristotle (circa 384-322 BCE)

eth·ics 'eTHiks/ *noun*.

moral principles that govern a person's behavior or the conducting of an activity.

Top Four Ethical Breaches

Misusing Company Time

Abusive Behavior

Lying

Violating Internet Policies

When does an ethical breach risk becoming a crisis?

Considerations:

- Is there escalating intensity?
- Does it risk coming under scrutiny?
- Will it interfere with normal business operations?
- Will it jeopardize our public image or bottom line?
- Is it a non-routine event?
- Does it risk undesired visibility?
- Would that undesired visibility threaten reputational damage?

危機 危機

“When written in Chinese, the word ‘crisis’ is composed of two characters. One represents danger and the other represents opportunity.” – John F. Kennedy

Crisis...just to name a few

- Uber, Uber and more Uber
- United Airlines...drags a passenger off the airplane
- Equifax Data breach
- Harvey Weinstein...Matt Lauer...Charlie Rose... Bill O'Reilly, Kevin Spacey, Al Franken and the list goes on and on
- Facebook

Why do PR professionals need to be mindful when addressing reputational crisis?

“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you’ll do things differently.”

-- Warren Buffett

Basic Questions...

The first thing we have to ask ourselves:

What is the issue?

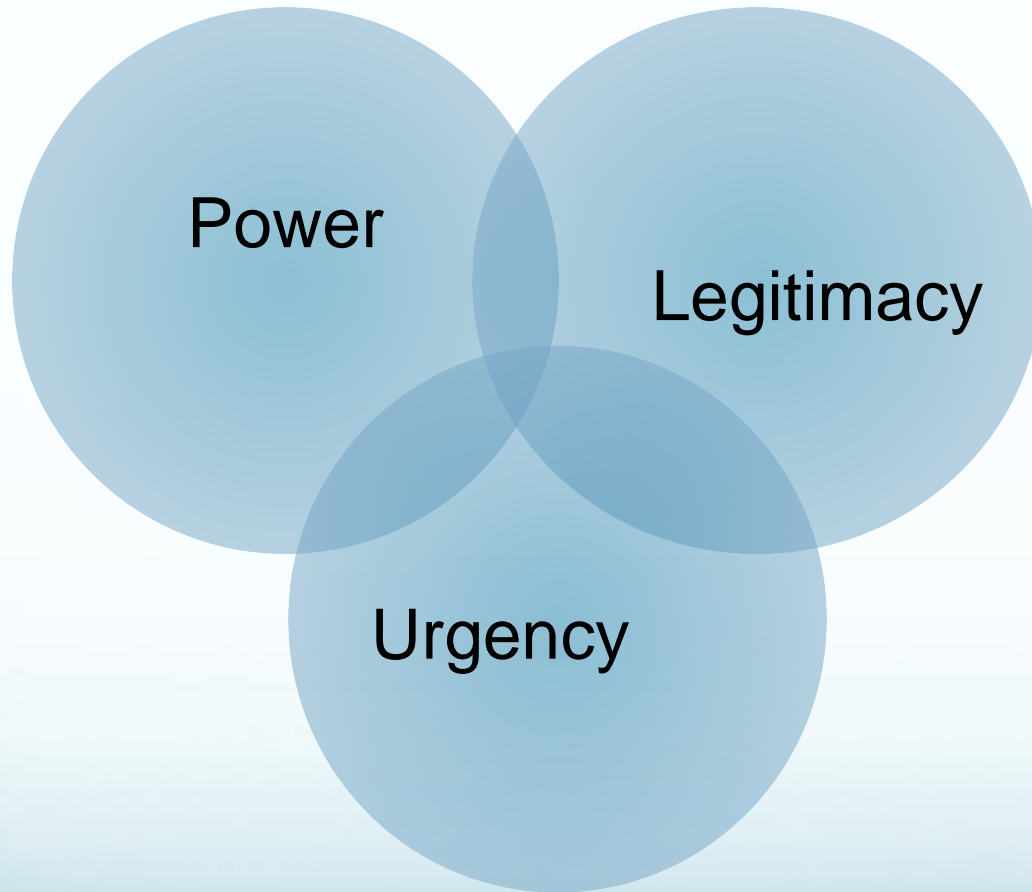
What problem are we trying to solve?

Who cares about it?

Some of the fundamentals

- Audience and message
- Stakeholder analysis
- “Golden hour” of crisis response and “first mover advantage”
- The “voice of the crisis”
- Scenario planning

Stakeholders



Ask the right questions about your stakeholders...how they influence you (and you them) and your outcome...

Think like a Stakeholder



- What is their interest / how will they be impacted and how much?
- What is the benefit of their engagement to you?
- What is the benefit *to the stakeholder* of their engagement?
- What is their level of influence over the outcome?
- What is their level of influence over other stakeholders?

- What is their history of engagement?
- What do you think is their likely level of support?
- What do you need from them?
- What do they need from you?
- What is the risk of engaging / not engaging with them? Barriers?
- Who else is engaging with them and their impact?

Steps to Scenario Planning

1 Scoping

What is the question/issue you want to answer/address?

2 Trend Analysis

Identify external forces in operation and consider the pressures they play

3 Building Scenarios

Using the outcomes from the first two stages, build your scenarios to explore

4 Generate Options

Consider options available within the scenarios - innovations, new services, projects or opportunities

5 Test Options

Identify and discuss potential implications and impacts of scenarios on the identified options

6 Action Plan

Define an action plan as a result of these activities

What is the biggest change in
crisis?





TIME

THE SILENCE BREAKERS

THE VOICES
THAT LAUNCHED
A MOVEMENT







TIME

ENOUGH.

MSDStrong

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and [unreadable] for [unreadable]
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“Truth to tell...tell it early, tell it all and tell it
yourself.”

-- Lanny J. Davis, Clinton White House
spokesperson

“Tell me what you pay attention to and I will
tell you who you are.”

-- Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega y Gasset

A magnifying glass with a black handle and frame is positioned over a white document. The word "Values" is printed in a bold, orange font within the lens of the magnifying glass. The background is a light blue gradient with a darker blue wave-like pattern at the bottom.

Values

The Voice of the Crisis:
Does it Matter?

An extraordinary example *“Voice” of the Crisis*

- <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/09/29/554458065/you-should-be-outraged-air-force-academy-head-tells-cadets-about-racism-on-campus>



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