



# Crisis Communication: Crisis and Issues Planning & Management

*with Bob Kopach & Steve Singerman*

**Public Relations Directors | PGM**

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# Get To Know Bob

## Bob Kopach

Founder & President | Cast Consulting Group

- 30+ years of corporate communications experience including head of domestic and international communications for Jim Beam Brands Worldwide and Agave Loco Brands in addition to working in senior management positions for Edelman Public Relations and Ketchum Communications.
- Extensive experience with cause-marketing programs that focus on nonprofit and philanthropic organizations such as The National Science Olympiad, The Eco-Friendly Mobile Farm Stand Project, The RumChata Foundation and The Illinois Restaurant Association Education Foundation.



# Get To Know Steve



## Steve Singerman

Founder & President | Cast Consulting Group

- Executive-level public relations / marketing veteran of nearly 40 years
- 5+ years of in-house counsel and a career of managing communications teams and office / department profit centers
  - including Terlato Wines International
- Worked with C-Suite level executives, including the American Bar Association, Miller Brewing Company, Aveda Corporation, and Chicago's Navy Pier.
- Media training experience

# Let's Get To Know You!

Let us know where  
you're tuning in  
from in the  
comments!



“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 Buffet







**Planning  
Ahead**

**When A  
Crisis Occurs**

# Planning Ahead

## 1 Getting Started

- ✓ Knowing you need a crisis plan is the first step
- ✓ This is a group operation. Advanced coordination is essential
- ✓ There will be homework

# Planning Ahead

## 2 Preparation

- ✓ Designate crisis team and media spokesperson(s) in advance
  - Media Training
- ✓ One corporate comm. designate (not spokespersons) at each location
- ✓ Create telephone chain for alerts
- ✓ Develop key messages and holding statement



# Planning Ahead

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## Monitor, Evaluate & Alert Process

- ✓ News monitoring is 24/7 (traditional, media and social)
- ✓ Establish a phone tree
- ✓ Traditionally: Corp. Comms > CEO/CFO > Legal > Operations
- ✓ Small team reviews situation and determines validity/scope/danger/next steps



**Planning  
Ahead**

**When A  
Crisis Occurs**



# Types of Crisis Situations

- ✓ Immediate emergency
- ✓ Company-discovered issue
- ✓ Politics and opinions
- ✓ Industry/regulatory issue
- ✓ Competitor issue
- ✓ Supplier or distributor issue
- ✓ Outside-source discovered issue
- ✓ Marketing partner

\*Consider: Fact, Rumor, Speculation

# When A Crisis Occurs

## 1 Potential First Steps

- ✓ Internal/external fact finding
- ✓ Contact authorities if necessary
- ✓ Write holding statement / news release / Q&A / social media posts
- ✓ Prepare management/company spokesperson (likely CEO)
- ✓ Reach out to predetermined media
- ✓ Alert employees as necessary

# When A Crisis Occurs

## As a Rule...



**Take Responsibility**



**Blame Others**

Critical difference between the two:

- ✓ Responsibility: "We will get to the bottom of this"
- ✓ Being a leader = managing the situation
- ✓ Communicate accurately and continually

# When A Crisis Occurs

## 2 Flow of Communication

**Information needs to come from a single source**

**And yet...**

**Employees are typically the forgotten audience**



# News Delivery Options

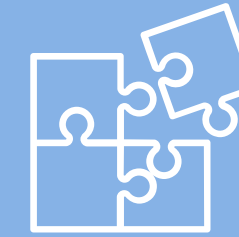
**Phone / Live / Recorded** – Print, Radio, TV, Company Website & Social Media

- ✓ Reactive prepared written statement from designated spokesperson for specific media request
- ✓ Proactive prepared written statement from designated spokesperson released to specific media
- ✓ Reactive interview with verbal statement for specific media request
- ✓ Proactive interview with verbal statement for designated media

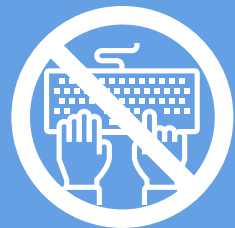
# News Delivery Options: Social Media



**Assume a tornado  
social media coverage**



**Determine what's real**



**In general, don't respond  
to individual posts**



**Use your website/social  
media for statements**

**In conclusion...**



# A Few Golden Rules

- ✓ Take responsibility, not blame
- ✓ Be sympathetic; don't be defensive
- ✓ Avoid knee-jerk responses
- ✓ Take appropriate actions; deliver on promises and deadlines
- ✓ Conduct ongoing news analysis. Assess post-crisis communications needs
- ✓ Continue communication with all stakeholders
- ✓ Don't hesitate to communicate steps taken to manage the issue

