

Communicating Through the COVID-19 Crisis

- Crisis as opportunity
- Building adaptive organizations
- Communication planning and goal setting
- Communicating through the Coronavirus Crisis
- Key takeaways and discussion



Danger and Opportunity in Crises



“When written in Chinese, the word ‘crisis’ is composed of two characters - one represents danger, and the other represents opportunity.”

- John F. Kennedy

危 机

Chinese character
“wei”

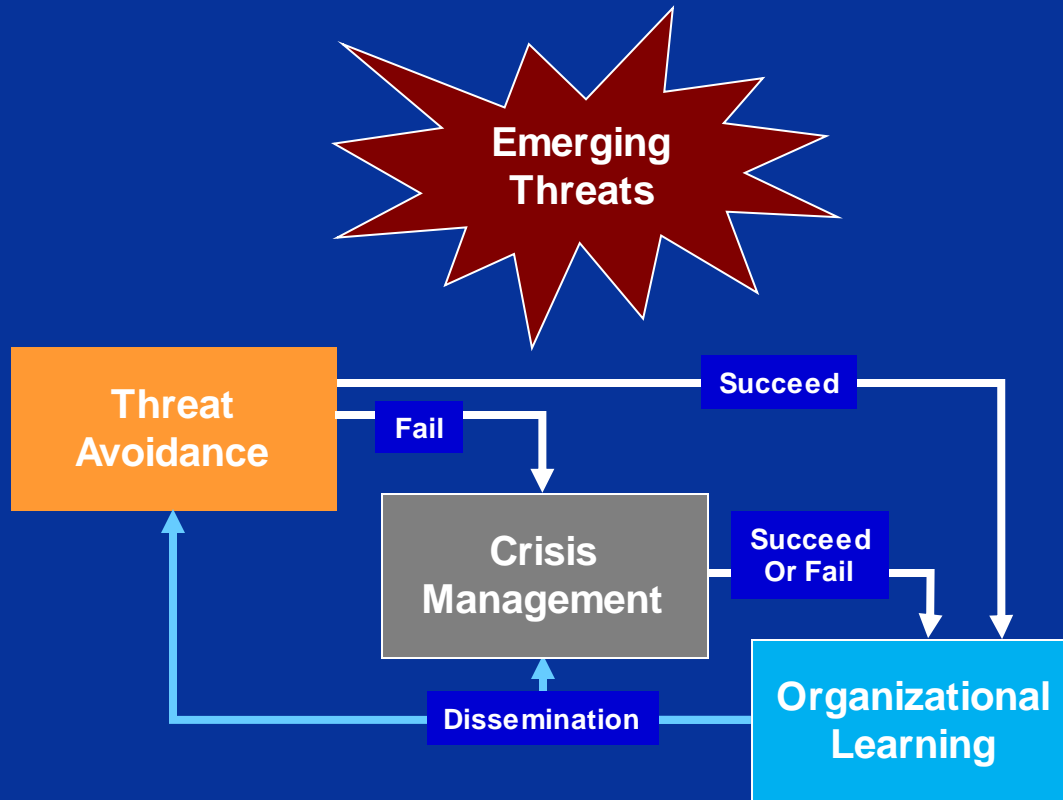
Chinese character
“ji”

Building Adaptive Organizations

Potential threats (and opportunities) emerge all the time, so...

1. Can we recognize emerging threats and, prioritize and mobilize to prevent them from hurting us?
→ *Threat Avoidance*
2. If something bad happens, do we have the capacity to respond rapidly and effectively to it?
→ *Crisis Management*
3. Once we have avoid threats or managed crises, do we learn and disseminate key insights?
→ *Organizational Learning*

The Three Pillars of Adaptive Organizations



Based on slides of IMD (Lausanne, Switzerland)

**“An organization’s ability to learn,
and translate that learning into
action rapidly, is the ultimate
competitive advantage.”**

- Jack Welch

A Crisis Communication Plan

During a crisis a company needs:
Crisis Communication Plan



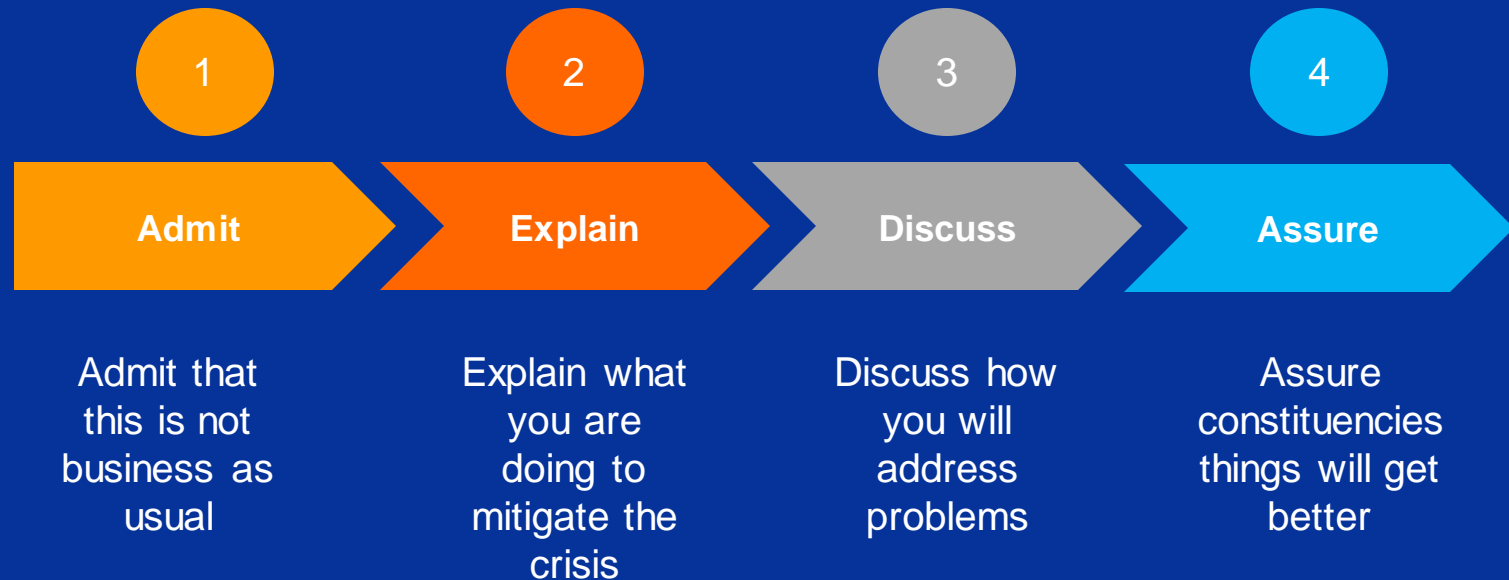
Crisis Communication Goals

- First and foremost, aim to regain trust of critical constituents around the globe
- Leverage the situation to gain competitive advantage and reputational capital by addressing changes in a responsible, thoughtful way
- Resolve issue thoroughly to have a long-term effect, not only provide a short-term Band-Aid solution

How to Communicate During a Crisis

- Define the problem
- Gather relevant information
- Centralize communications
- Communicate early and often—both inside and out
- Get inside the media's head
- Communicate directly with affected constituencies
- Keep the business running

What to Say During This Crisis

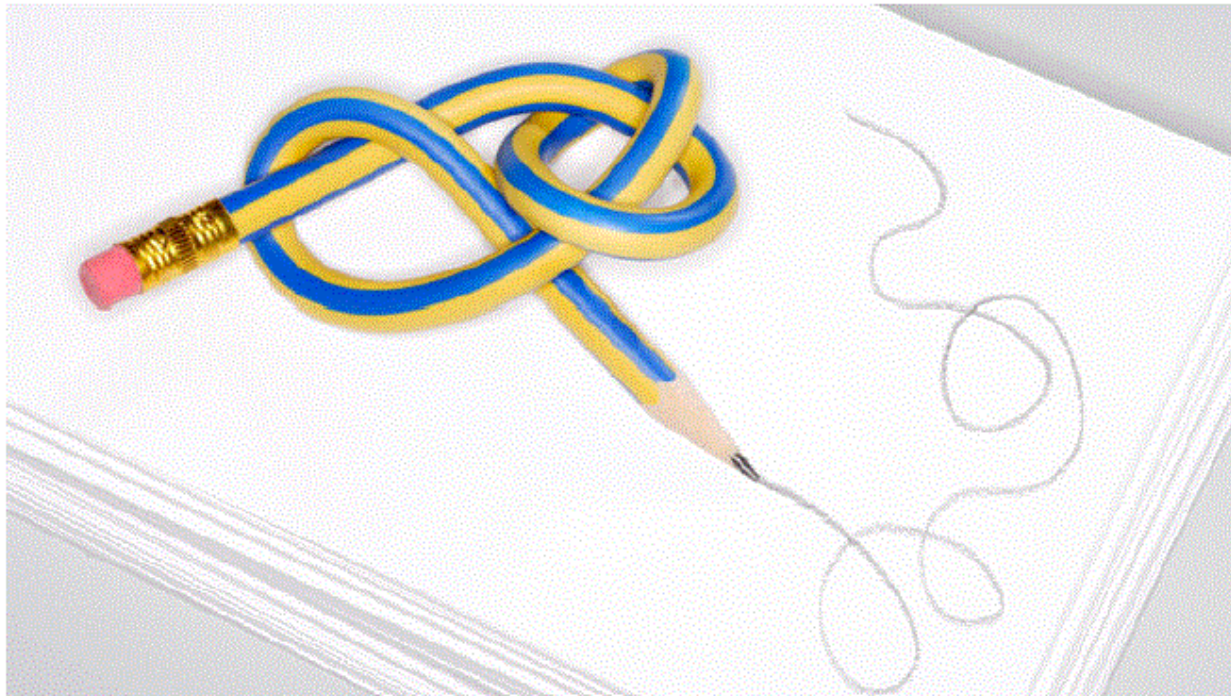


LEADERSHIP

Communicating Through the Coronavirus Crisis

by Paul A. Argenti

March 13, 2020



Nicholas Rigg/Getty Images

Communicating Through the Coronavirus

- Step 1: Create a Centralized Comms Team
- Step 2: Focus first on your employees
- Step 3: Communicate regularly with customers
- Step 4: Reassure shareholders
- Step 5: Be proactive with communities

Communicating Through the Coronavirus: Relevant Cases

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Coronavirus Update

We're here to help our customers who may be impacted by COVID-19.

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By Jordan Valinsky, CNN Business
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Communicating Through the Coronavirus: A Few Bad Examples

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By Justin Harper
BBC News

18 February 2020

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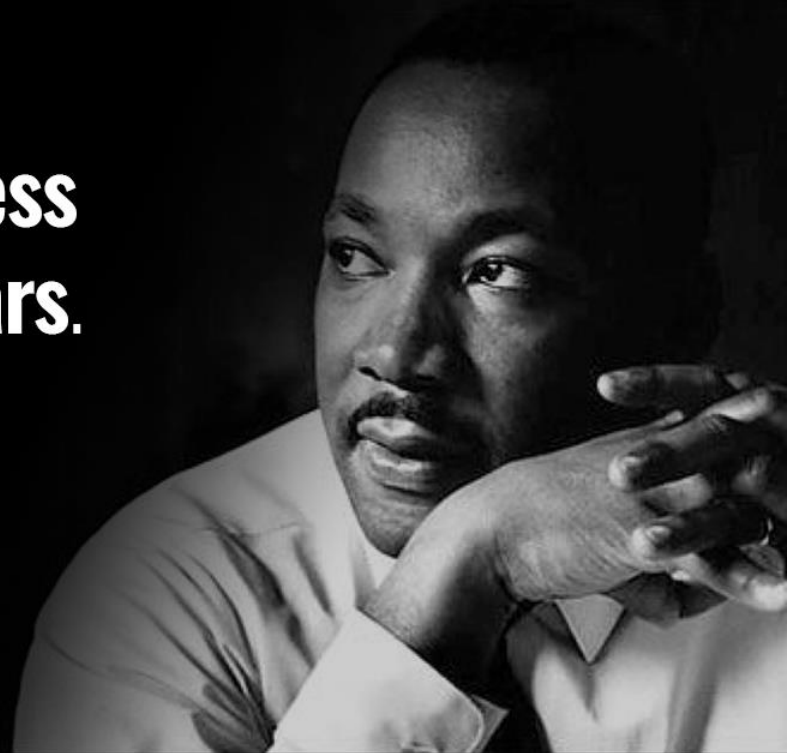
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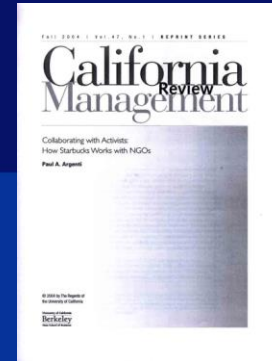
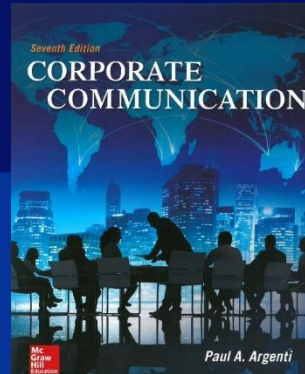
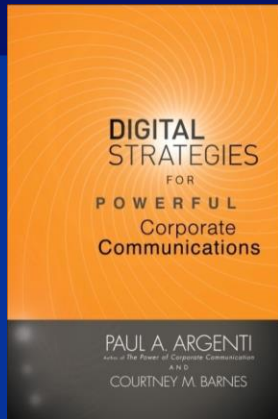
Key Takeaways on Crisis Communication

- Think about the opportunity that comes with a crisis
- Decentralized management is fine, but strategically aligned communications in a crisis is necessary to “speak in harmony”
- Spotting predictable surprises can help avoid crises and present opportunities
- Organizations also need to think strategically about communication, especially in a crisis
- Learn from this crisis and start creating communication plans for the next one when it’s over

Only in the **darkness**
can you see the **stars**.

- Martin Luther King Jr.





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