



Yes, It Could Happen to You!

Crisis Communication Planning

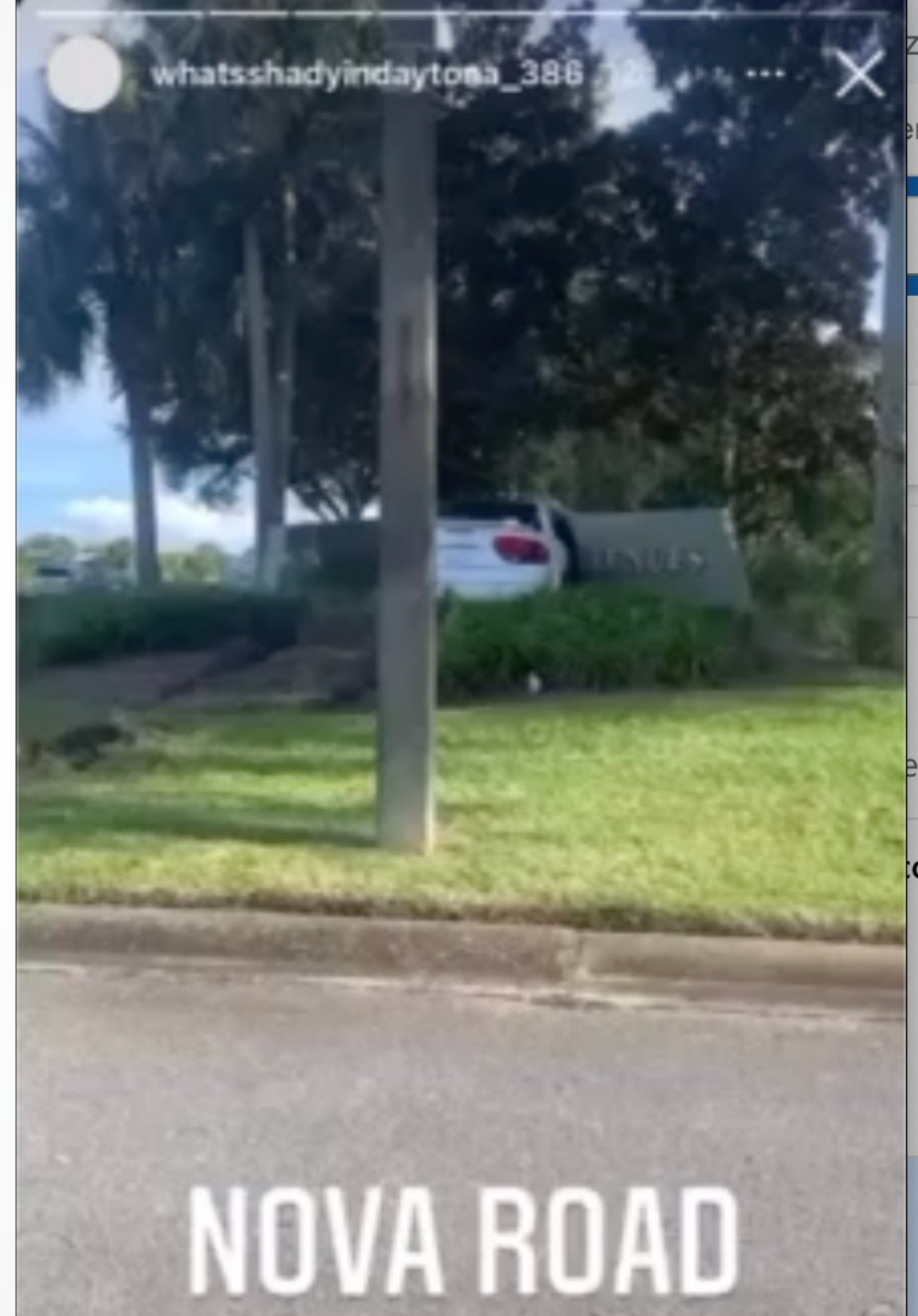
Andrew Sandall, The Bishop Museum of Science and Nature

Martha Wells, Carter Global

Kevin McNulty, NetWeave Social



**This
one
time...**



**This
other
time...**



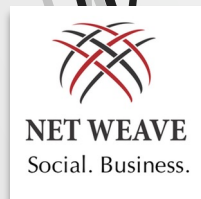
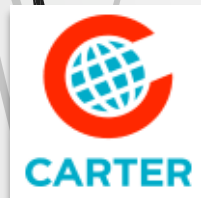
Topics for Discussion

- Introductions
- Why Crisis Plans are a PRIORITY
- What is a Crisis?
- Developing a Crisis Plan
- What to do When a Crisis Occurs
- Crisis Communications
- Questions to Answer During a Crisis
- Working with the Media
- Questions?



Introductions

- Name
- Position
- Company
- Years Experience
- What you hope to get out of this course



Why Crisis Plans are a **PRIORITY**

- Crisis Mgt is an organizational leadership **responsibility**.
- Many plans are *reactive* nature, limiting their effectiveness.
- Poor communication, especially during a crisis, can destroy an institution's reputation and erode trust from stakeholders and partners.
- Practice!





Exercise

- Write down what you need to do to make the case for creating/refining your crisis management & communication plans at your museum.



What is a Crisis?

cri · sis

/ 'kr̩sɪs /

Noun

1. A time of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger.
2. A time when a difficult or important decision must be made.
3. Any event or situation that can harm an institution's viability and reputation.



Types of Crises

External

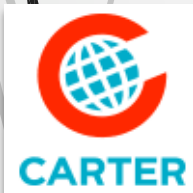
- Worldwide or regional incident that affects or may affect your audience
- Your response or non-response may affect audience perception of you

Related

- Incident within your industry or near your location that affects your audience or their perception of the industry/area

Internal

- Incident with your brand or at your facility

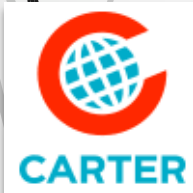


Types of Crises

Perceived

Maybe nothing actually went wrong but...

- Optics are bad.
- Bad actors are trying to put you in a bad light.
- A related crisis has made you “guilty by association.”
- A reporter has an ax to grind.



If It IS Your Crisis, Have a Plan



If It IS Your Crisis, Have a Plan

- It's crucial to have a Crisis Communication Plan (CCP) that includes all stakeholders and internal resources.
- Form a Crisis Team in advance that includes Leadership, Legal, HR, Ops, Finance, Curators, Comms/PR, Vet (if applicable).
- Meet to anticipate potential problems or controversies, and to review changes.



Exercise

- Write down who would be on your Crisis Team.
- Write down all your audiences:
 - Board?
 - Staff?
 - Volunteers?
 - Donors?
 - Members?



If It IS Your Crisis, Have a Plan

- Develop an effective emergency alert system.
- Schedule regular drills and reviews of plan.
- Designate a Media Spokesperson who is
 - Trained to deal with media
 - Empowered to make statements
 - Connected to Crisis Team



Exercise

- Write down who would be Crisis Spokesperson.
- Who would take their place if they weren't available?



CCP Considerations

Initiation – Who can activate CCP and how?

Notification – Spell out comm chain & method.

Chain of Command – What if spokesperson/leadership is unavailable? Who is next? Then who?

Communications – How will crisis team talk to each other? What if phones are out? What if power/internet is out? When are Emg Svc to be called & by who? What external audiences/press should be contacted?

Remote Control – If you are cutoff (i.e. – hurricane) is someone outside affected area available?

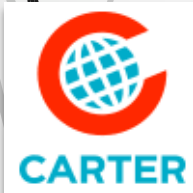




REMEMBER

*Communication does not equal
management of a situation!*

*Don't let communication needs drive
management of the situation.*





Be Proactive

- Don't wait for a crisis to happen – pay attention to head one off
- Don't avoid difficult conversations
- Communicate early and often
- Err on the side of caution
- Prepare statements for worst case so you're ready
- Monitor companies in crisis to see how they handled it on social and what the response was



Be Proactive

Avoid creating your own crisis – Reality check “edgy” posts. If you have to ask if it’s okay, it’s probably not.

Look for ways things can go wrong – If there is a way to misunderstand, someone will. Think about worst case scenarios.

Have a Social Media Policy – Make sure your staff knows what is allowed and not allowed, and that they are to stay off social media in an emergency unless they are a part of the CCP.



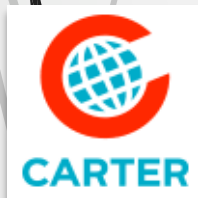
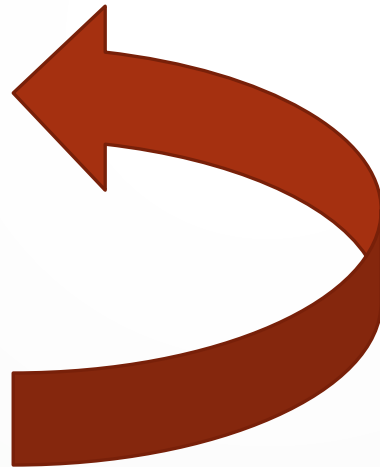
What if the Worst Happens

- Assemble Crisis Team.
- Gather all pertinent facts as quickly as possible.
- Assess situation –make follow-up phone calls/searches.
- Implement CCP.
- Contact media when reliable information is available.
- Ensure that employees know who the designated media representative is.
- When possible, develop animal and/or exhibit fact sheets for media distribution (ideally have in stock).



What if the Worst Happens?

- POSITION
- ASSESS
- RESPOND
- UPDATE
- MONITOR



Position

Make sure you and your staff are in position to monitor the situation and carry out the CCP.

- Comms should have at least one staffer on location.
- Should be on comms with senior leadership, and a separate channel for staff (use earpieces).
- Record visuals – decide later if appropriate to use in comms, but you will want a record regardless
- No one untrained should EVER touch social or press outlets, so if nonsocial team members are backups, TRAIN THEM!



Assess

- Could we be at fault?
- Are we being factual/objective?
- Is our business impacted?
- Will regulators become involved?
- Is there an industry position on the issue?
- What is our position on the issue?
- Do circumstances dictate an exception?
- Do we need to involve corporate? Partners?



Respond

- You have more control of the story if you are first.
- Break on social simultaneously with media – they are more likely to be on your side if you don't scoop them,
- Keep statements short & factual – avoid editorial and hyperbole.
- Balance defense and sensitivity – sincerity is everything on social.



Respond - Example

1. If you have no details or the story is developing, generically confirm that an incident has occurred, but do not offer any details.

“We understand that _____ has occurred.”

2. Explain your priorities and actions:

“We are currently attending to the needs of the guests and families involved.”

3. Explain authorities involved and cooperation:

“The _____ department is assisting us with this event.”



Respond - Example

4. Provide generic background info related to the incident:

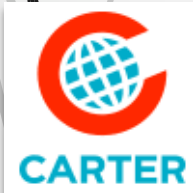
“The attraction involved in the incident was _____, which was installed in...”

5. Reassure public of your top priority:

“The safety of our guests is our number one priority.”

6. Assure people you will continue to update as more info is available, and when/where next update will be:

“We will post another update on our FB page at _____.”



Update

- People will race to social media to find out what's going on, so provide initial statement on EVERY platform telling people which platform updates can be found on.
- Limit updates to a single platform if you are overwhelmed but provide updated links on other platforms.
- Have standard answers for common questions ready.



Monitor

- Monitor all social media channels and Google Alerts for all mentions of your brand or personnel.
- Set alerts for hashtags and watch for spontaneous hashtags.
- Respond factually to everything you can because in a lack of information, people will fill in their own blanks.
- Make sure monitoring staffer provides feedback to Comms and leadership at regular intervals.



Working with the Media

- If facts are immediately available – tell reporters on the spot and update as often as possible.
- If facts are not available – tell reporters you will get back with them. Don't use this as a put-off.
- Know and respect the reporters' deadlines.
- Treat each reporter fairly and equally. No exclusive's to a specific reporter.
- Never say "No Comment" - Explain the reason for information being withheld.



Working with the Media

- Be concise and choose words carefully. Most interviews or statements are seldom printed in their entirety.
- Stick to the facts and don't speculate. If asked to speculate – tell them this is not useful
- Be proactive on getting information out to the media.
- Keep explanations simple and to the point.
- Emphasize solutions.



Working with the Media

- No dollar damage estimates should be given until investigated, appraised and approved.
- Avoid statements of liability – don't try to lay blame.
- Show empathy - Express genuine concern for victims.
- Remain calm - Your manner and words show your control of the situation.



Media Training

- Media Training is designed to help you say what you mean and mean what you say.
- Mass Media require concise, focused, consistent messages - “Sound Bites” last 60-90 seconds.
- When preparing for Media Interviews:
 - Analyze your audience and situation.
 - Know what information can be released.
 - Know your most important point(s).
 - Know how different media operate.
- Practice Communication/Presentation techniques



10 Interview Commandments

1. Remember the inverted pyramid.
2. Know your audience.
3. Don't repeat the negative.
4. Avoid jargon.
5. Don't Speculate.
6. Don't exaggerate.
7. Don't lose your cool – don't be defensive.
8. Ask for clarification if you don't understand the question.
9. Nothing is off the record.
10. Never say "no comment."



Questions?





Exercise

1. Split into three groups.
2. Choose roles for a Crisis Team.
3. Choose a crisis scenario.
4. Briefly tabletop drill the scenario.
5. Debrief.





Do

- Reduce drama by removing emotional and colorful words from your statements.
- Include only the facts you can verify with 100 percent certainty.
- Correct errors you find in others' posts immediately.
- Develop strong working relationships with press & influencers throughout the year - it will pay off in a crisis.
- Have your legal counsel review statements if possible.



Don't

- Release names of people involved - leave that to authorities.
- Speculate - stick to the facts.
- Paint word pictures (avoid using vivid words such as victim, tragic, scene, gruesome, or awful).
- Provide a timeline of the incident with too many specifics - this will create the beginning of a dramatic story.
- Use industry jargon.



Questions?

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