

Identify People In Group Photos

Having difficulty properly matching up names and faces in group photos? Try this technique:

When everyone gathers for a group photo, hand each person a large paper plate with a number printed on one side. Ask everyone to print their name on the other side. Then take one group shot with everyone holding their numbered paper plate and a second (or third) shot without the plates.

You now have a way to match up names and faces by referring to the numbered and named paper plates. ♦

Reputation-Building Actions

What is it that your nonprofit does best? Do you *really* know? Take time to identify those particular services or programs and then develop a plan to make the public fully aware of them. ♦

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CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Crisis Management Traps And How to Avoid Them

When a damaging situation impacts your organization, it's critical to communicate in a manner that's calm, clear, consistent and compassionate. That said, adrenaline can pose a challenge. How should one respond in the heat of the moment?

"We help leaders of organizations and communicators around the world to do and say the right things on the worst days of their organization's lives," says Jonathan Hemus, managing director of Insignia, a crisis communications firm. "I've been working in this area for 30 years, and my passion is to help organizations and their stakeholders avoid the needless harm caused by a mishandled crisis." Here Hemus shares four common crisis management traps and how to avoid them:

Trap 1: Communicating without thinking first. "In times of crisis, there's intense pressure on everyone involved, so sometimes people react hastily purely on instinct without first considering the right thing to say," Hemus shares.

How to avoid: Set strategic intent before committing to action. "Your crisis response team must articulate what success looks like," Hemus suggests. "They should have a clear answer to these questions: 'At the end of this crisis, where do we want to end up?' and 'How do we want to be perceived by our stakeholders?' Setting this strategic intent provides a foundation for purposeful communication and aligns a team around a common end goal which focuses everyone in the same direction."

Trap 2: Reacting to the crisis rather than shaping it. "Sometimes the organization finds itself forever following the crisis, rather than influencing its direction," Hemus explains.

How to avoid: Engage in scenario planning. "Gather a small group of people in a quiet room to discuss how the situation may develop," he suggests. "They should anticipate what might happen next and ask themselves how this crisis could get worse. What would make our problem even bigger? What is the absolute worst-case scenario?" Advance scenario planning against your key risks (which takes place before an active crisis) can help you prepare even more proactively.

Trap 3: Showing more concern for the organization than for its stakeholders. "When a crisis occurs, there is a tendency to feel that you as an organization are the victim," Hemus explains. "When someone criticizes an organization for which you have pride, it can create a defensive feel to communications."

How to avoid: Look at situations from the outside in. "Communicators should put themselves in their stakeholders' shoes to ensure messages land well," Hemus offers.

Trap 4: Allowing your reputation to suffer as a result of cold, uncaring communications.

How to avoid: "In a crisis, always communicate in a way that aligns with the values of your organization," Hemus insists. "Communicators should counsel colleagues to respond quickly, openly and transparently — like a human, not a robot." ♦

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