

# Week 8. Preparation & Recap

6 March 2017

# Today's learning goals

1. Be familiar with the main elements to be included in a **crisis communication plan**.
2. Understand how to **draft objectives, select strategies** and **design tactics** for effective crisis communication planning.
3. Be prepared to **apply theories** to the preparation and response stages of crisis communication.

# CMP - Contents

## Main contents

- Cover page
- Rehearsal dates
- Introduction
- Purpose and objectives
- Acknowledgment
- CMT Contact List
- Key publics & notifications
- Stakeholder Worksheet
- Communication Strategy
- List of Key media
- Crisis Control Centre

## Appendices

- Crisis inventory
- Key messages & templates
- Trick questions
- Proprietary Information
- Pre-gathered information
- List of related URLs
- Equipment and supplies
- Evaluation forms

# CMP Elements – Stakeholders

- The contact stakeholder worksheet should specify what actions are to be taken when a stakeholder gets in touch with the company.
  - Who will answer?
  - What means will be used to answer?
  - How quickly each stakeholder group should be contacted?
- Different worksheets will be needed for different crises.

# CMP Elements –Strategy

- The CMP should include the overall list of objectives, strategies and tactics that might be needed during a crisis.
  - **Objectives** – the quantifiable outcomes that we want to achieve with our actions.
  - **Strategies** – the abstract/theoretical measures to be taken to achieve the objectives.
  - **Tactics** – the specific actions that will be implemented in line with the strategies.

# Exercise - Strategy

- Pick the crisis with the highest CT score based on your risk assessment from last week.
- Determine your objective(s), strategies and tactics for that possible crisis.
- Input your suggestions on the Google Docs file that you will find on Canvas.

# CMP Elements – Key messages

- Once objectives, strategies and tactics have been identified, a list of key messages that are to be communicated during a crisis is to be compiled.
  - These should be generic, but in alignment with the communication strategy.
  - These should be aligned with the purpose statement at the beginning of the plan.

# CMP Elements – Key media

- Because the media will be one of the most important publics you will need to deal with, you must have records on **how to contact them**.
  - List all means of contacting the media, preferably identifying specific people (editors, correspondents...) instead of general addresses.
  - Group them either by importance (in relation to your company) or by type.

# CMP Elements – Control centre

- The control centre can be the usual working space or a specially designed location in the event that the usual space is unavailable.
  - List at least 2 possible alternative spaces (including the address).
  - If an external venue is chosen, specify how access can be gained.
- The idea is to give specific instructions to CMT members on where to go when alerted.

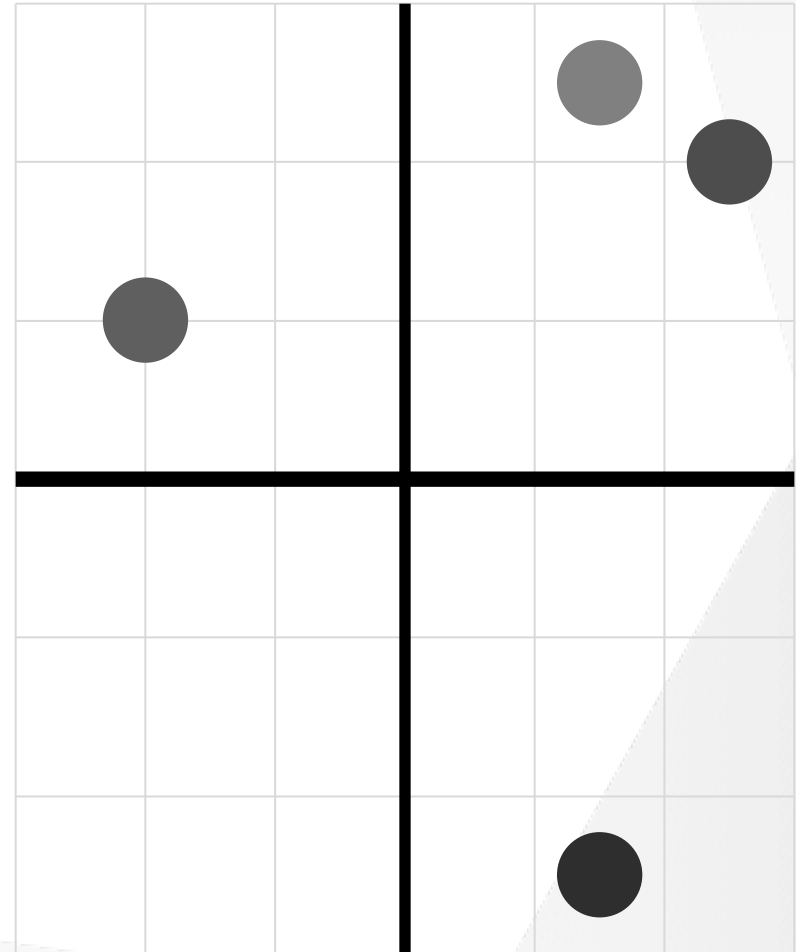
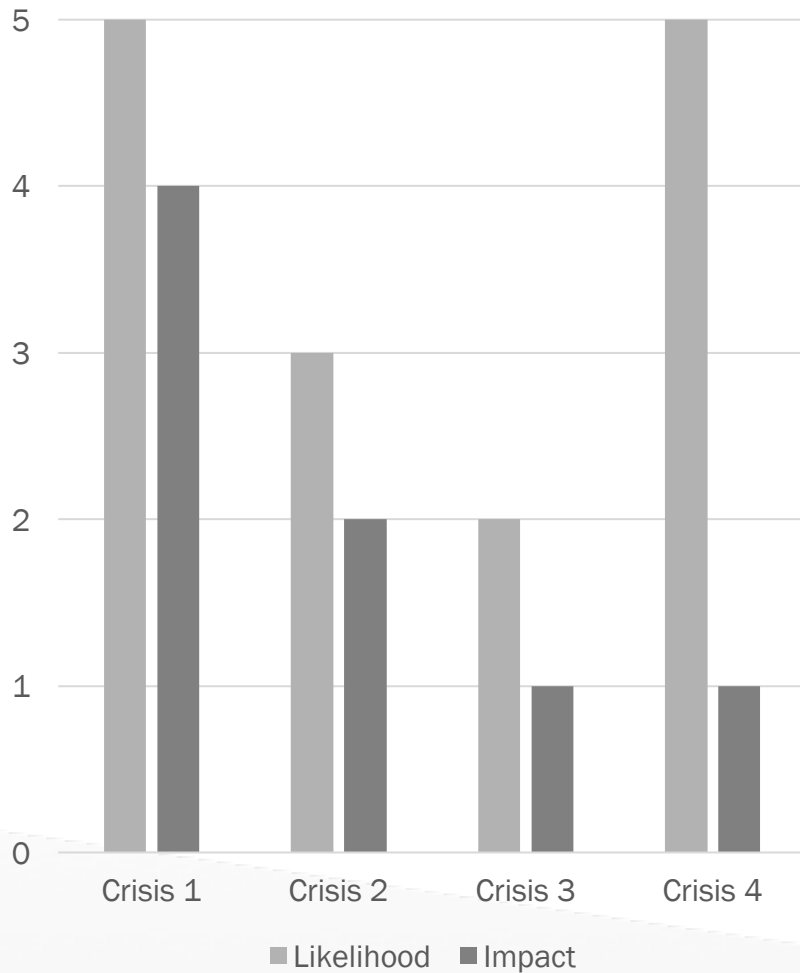
# CMP Appendices

- The Appendices function as a “knowledge database” – information that will come handy during a crisis and could be useful to have in hand.

# CMP Elements – Crisis inventory

- A crisis inventory would include **the list of the most likely crises** that could affect an organization.
- It also should include a **brief risk assessment** of the most likely ones to happen and what their impact would be on the company.
- For the top 2 or 3, **a brief scenario** should be developed.

# CMP Elements – Crisis inventory



# CMP Elements – Templates

- Templates are **prewritten messages** (press releases, social media posts, website updates) with just some blanks to filled in during a crisis.
  - It is useful to write a text without blanks and then delete information that is crisis specific.
- It is useful if these are pre-approved by the legal department.

# CMP Elements – Pre-gathered info

- When the crisis hits, **no time should be “wasted” looking for information** such as:
  - Definitions of most important terms related to the crisis.
  - Information about the company (value, investors, industry, history...)
  - Links to useful websites or similar information.
- All this information should be pre-gathered, summarized and incorporated into the CMP.

# CMP Elements – Evaluation forms

- The response to a crisis is valuable information for a company.
  - All actions, activities and communications must be recorded for later analysis and evaluation.
- It is also important to collect information from the CMT and those involved during the crisis.
- We will look at evaluation forms later on this semester.

# Beyond the CMP

- CMP's are important and necessary, but are not sufficient. Do not feel “safe” because your organization has a plan:
  - Plans are **only guidelines** and will not include all possible crises or scenarios;
  - Plans **become outdated very quickly**, so you must update them regularly;
  - Plans are of little use if they are not **rehearsed and tested** before the crisis arrives.

# Theory & Practice

- Theories **help us analyse**, not just describe crises.
- Theories are **aides** in the design and implementation of crisis communication strategies.
- Not all theories are suitable for all crises. When making use of a theory, you need to **make sure it suits the case**.

# Theory & cases

- 2013 VW Gearbox Problems
- 2008 Sanlu Tainted Milk
- 2012 KFC Unsafe Meat
- 2008 Liu Xiang & Nike
- 2008 Guo Meimei & Red Cross

# Exercise – Strategy (II)

- Pick the crisis with the highest CT score based on your risk assessment from last week.
- Select one theory and use it to determine the most suitable objective(s), strategies and tactics for that possible crisis.
- Input your suggestions on the Google Docs file that you will find on Canvas.

# What did we learn today...

- We completed the list of elements to be included in the crisis communication plan.
- We revised the theories we learnt in weeks 2 and 3 and saw how we can use them in...
  - The analysis of previous crises;
  - In the preparation stage for possible future crises.