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Management Consultants  
In Communications

# COMMUNICATING TOUGH, TOUCHY, SENSITIVE SITUATIONS, DEALING WITH HIGH-LEVEL EMOTIONAL ISSUES

## *Participant Guide*

*A Web Seminar Sponsored by the*

**International Association of  
Business Communicators (IABC)**

*Presented by*


**James E. Lukaszewski,  
ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA**

**Wednesday, November 18, 2009  
12:00 – 1:30 p.m. EST**



## *Contents*

- Participant Letter
- PowerPoint Presentation
- Handout
- Discussion Outline
- James E. Lukaszewski Biography
- CD Order Form



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November 2009

Dear Seminar Participant:

Thank you for registering for the special IABC seminar, *Communicating Tough, Touchy, Sensitive Situations, Dealing With High-Level Emotional Issues*. This, of course, is one of the most challenging topics of our time. Anger is rising globally. Litigation is up, malpractice is up, violence is up, and communities and shareholders are pushing back. The cost of dealing with angry publics is rising. Anger seems to be contagious. We've learned that critics, enemies, and victims (those we injure or make angry) tend to accumulate rather than dissipate.

This program walks participants through a seven-step process for dealing with these challenging emotional situations including the preparation involved in understanding empathy, and working through issues and problems raised both by emotionally charged questions and irrational or highly emotional questioners. Participants will also learn about managing through contentious situations where controversy and confrontation are present or possible.

Should you wish to contact me ahead of time with the issues or questions you'd like me to address during the seminar, you may do so by phone or e-mail:

914.681.0000 – Office  
tlg@e911.com – E-mail  
www.e911.com – Web site

Included in this *Participant Guide* is a discussion outline. Should you or the groups attending with you care to talk about the program, assess what you learned, and identify some additional questions you might like to explore following the presentation, this outline can get a good discussion started.

Thank you for participating in this Web seminar. I know you'll find the program very helpful, useful, and important.

Sincerely,

James E. Lukaszewski, ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA  
Chairman and President  
The Lukaszewski Group Inc.

P.S. My books, monographs, and strategy newsletters are available through my Web site, [www.e911.com](http://www.e911.com).

Welcome to the IABC Virtual Seminar  
Wednesday, November 18, 2009

# Communicating Tough, Touchy, Sensitive Situations, Dealing With High-Level Emotional Issues

James E. Lukaszewski,  
ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA

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## Questions for Jim

To ask a question . . . click "Q&A" on the menu bar at the top of your screen.



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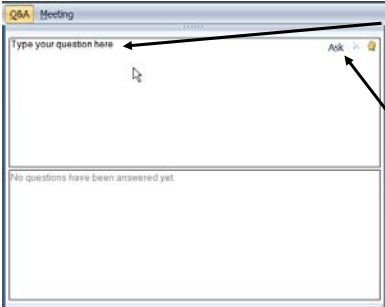
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## Questions for Jim



The screenshot shows a window titled "Q&A Meeting". Inside, there is a text input field with the placeholder text "Type your question here". To the right of the input field is an "Ask" button with a speech bubble icon. Below the input field, it says "No questions have been answered yet.".

1. Type your question in the upper box.
2. Click "Ask" to submit your question.

- Receipt of your question will be confirmed.

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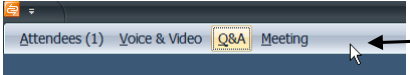
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## Questions for Jim



The screenshot shows a horizontal menu bar with several options: "Attendees (1)", "Voice & Video", "Q&A Meeting", and "Meeting". The "Q&A Meeting" option is highlighted with a blue background. An arrow points to this option.

Click anywhere on the menu bar to close the Q&A box.

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## To Ensure Listen-Only Mode Please Press Mute

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**Please Tell Jim Where You Work**

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[www.e911.com](http://www.e911.com)

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- Reader Recommendations

**Executive Action**  
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**June 2, 2009**  
Number 4

**Note to Readers**

Hey, welcome back.

Wow. There are more than 4,000 of you now, and the number grows every month. Hopefully I can maintain our high-level relationship and, perhaps, if you like it you can recommend it to others.

Please note the very special Web seminar on June 24, 2009 from 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m. EDT, *Are You Ready for Violence in Your Workplace?* This topic is growing in importance and being prepared is becoming more important. Please consider attending or recommending the program to others who may need this information. [Click here for registration details and more information, including pricing.](#)

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**James E. Lukaszewski, ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA**

Photo Credit: Harry Turner.

E-mail: [tlg@e911.com](mailto:tlg@e911.com)  
 Web site: [www.e911.com](http://www.e911.com)  
 Jim's Blog: [www.e911.com/crisisgurublog.html](http://www.e911.com/crisisgurublog.html)  
 Linked In: [www.linkedin.com/in/jameslukaszewski](http://www.linkedin.com/in/jameslukaszewski)  
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## Today's Program Is About

1. Seven-step process for dealing with challenging, highly emotional situations
2. Answering difficult questions and handling emotional questioners
3. Preempting contentious situations
4. Understanding the emotion, power, and causes of victimization and contention

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## What Makes People Contentious and Emotional

1. Threats to their core values
2. Negative language and behavior towards them
3. Fear
4. Failure to answer questions
5. Involuntary victimization

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## "The Computer Error"

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## Making a Disaster a Crisis

- Random victimization
- Slow response/explanation
- Blame shifting
- Failure to take responsibility
- Too little, too late
- Arrogance

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## Response Strategy

- Stop the production of victims
- Manage the victim dimension
- Communicate with key audiences and internally
- Notify those requiring notification
- Deal with the self-appointed, self-anointed

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## Seven Rules of Response

1. Manage the emotional dimension first
2. Give control to others
  - Controls
  - Laws
  - Monitoring
  - Oversight
  - Regulations
  - Restrictions
  - Rules

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## Seven Rules of Response

(Continued)

3. Calm things down. Use positive language and images
4. Suggest some useful, positive endpoints
5. Tell the truth/state or acknowledge the negatives
6. Make credible comparisons (avoid metaphors and analogies)
7. Try for consensus/solution (incrementally)

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## The Perfect Combination of Two Great Companies

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## Trust Loss Triggers

1. Cold, arrogant, late or missed responses
2. False, phony excuses
3. No advance warning
4. No compassion (at first)
5. No input from victims
6. No obvious plan beyond Day One
7. Over optimism
8. Problems ignored
9. Sensible alternatives ignored
10. Too much spin
11. Questions go unanswered

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## Management Communication Responsibilities

1. Create a communications environment that will support your goals from the employees' perspective, even those who will be leaving
2. Build trust
3. Focus on the process and the patterns
4. Prepare to manage unintended consequences
5. Sort out and clarify messages
6. Show empathy, sympathy
7. Keep it simple and repetitious

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## Management Communication Impact

CEO	5%
Upper management	6%
Middle management	7%
District management	10%
Supervisory management	30%
TGNTM	20%
IMIUI	22%
	<u>100%</u>

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## Expect Resistance

- The 20-50-30 Rule
- Explain rationale
- Provide early achievable goals
- Promise problems
- Watch the bureaucracy
- Expose and discuss resistance
- Outrun the resisters

Price Pritchett, *Resistance: Moving Beyond the Barriers to Change*, Copyright © 1996; [www.pritchett.net](http://www.pritchett.net).

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## Frequent Anticipatable Mistakes in Mergers, Acquisitions, Downsizing

- Key message is untrue or unbelievable
- Sloppy due diligence
- Lack of planning business choices
- The process is damaging, irritating, humiliating, and deceptive
- Whoever has 51% always wins in the end

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## Contention Reduction Communication Habits

1. Candor
2. Openness, accessibility
3. Truthfulness
4. Responsiveness
5. Empathy/apology
6. Transparency
7. Engagement
8. Clarification and correction

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## Contention Reducing Strategies

1. Use positive, declarative language
2. Avoid colorful, judgmental, negative language
3. Seek questions
  - Killer
  - QYWLTRTIOSWAY (Questions You Would Love To Respond To If Only Somebody Would Ask You)
  - Google/Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn

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## Management & Communication Delusions

- We can convert enemies and critics to friends and supporters
- Third parties can influence the behaviors and attitudes of critics, victims, and enemies
- Most opposition is irrational and can be exposed for what and who they are
- There is a back door or secret solution that will work, if we can only get the location and the key contact

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## Chicken Feathers

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## Community Core Values

- Health and safety
- Value of possessions and property
- Environmental threats
- Quality of life
  - Peace of mind
  - Pride in community
  - Absence of conflict
  - Freedom from fear
- Peer concern (neighborly pressure)
- Economic security

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## Contention Reducing Strategies (Continued)

- Answer all questions
- Inspire and teach with stories
- Care; look for things to like
- Be simple, repetitious

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## Use the Power of the Web

- Manage media coverage
- Reduce media calls
- Provides information 24/7
- Script everybody
- Set and manage the record
- Counteract the bloggers, bellyachers, bloviators, and boneheads
- Correct information is repeated

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## Contention Reduction Tests

1. How many critics, victims, and enemies will be created?
2. Have serious alternatives been considered and explained before being abandoned?
3. Will the intended decision, action, or communication build understanding and agreement?

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## Contention Prevention Analysis

### Assumptions

- New jobs
- Construction jobs
- New infrastructure
- Taxes
- Charities and CSR
- Community prestige
- Place for your children to work

### Realities

- For whom locally?
- Strangers in our community
- Who needs it?
- Tax income and financing?
- Community takeover
- Only for the really important people
- They will leave first

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## Compassionate Language

- Alarmed
- Appalled
- Ashamed
- Concerned
- Embarrassed
- Empathize
- Failed/failure
- Humiliated

- Mortified
- Regret/regrettable
- Sad/saddened
- Shocked/surprised
- Sorrowful/sorry
- Sympathy/sympathetic
- Tragic

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## Damaging, Contention Causing Words Masquerading as Compassion

- Disappointed
- Unfortunate
- Unhappy
- Unintended/unintentional
- Unnecessary
- Unsatisfied
- Unsupported

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## Persistent Attacks / Antagonism

### The D<sup>3</sup>UV<sup>2</sup>

Disheartened, Disgruntled, Disoriented  
Unconvinced Victims Needing a  
Victory Over Someone (Probably You)

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## Suicidal Strategies (Yours?)

- Blame shifting
- Blaming victims
- Characterization (name calling)
- Discrediting
- Disparagement
- Failure to answer
- Phony apologies
- Prophylactic humiliation
- Silence

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## Build Trust Into Your Base

- Advance information
- Check-backs
- In the decision-making process
- Input acted upon
- Opportunity for input
- Plain language
- Really being heard
- Simple, sensible, positive, constructive
- Repetition of useful information

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## Long-term Contention Management

- Find and build your base
- Build trust through advance information
- Construct a Web site/use the power of the Web
- First-line supervisors are the key
- Avoid missions, visions, values jargon unless it is lived every day
- Put a face on the organization's voice

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## James E. Lukaszewski, *ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA*



### Questions & Answers

To ask a question via phone, please press  
\* 1 on your telephone keypad.

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- December 16**     *Getting the Boss to Listen:  
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- January 27**     *Mobilizing Employee Attitudes to  
Build & Maintain Workforce  
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- February 24**    *Transforming Managers Into  
Better Communicators, Even  
Leaders*

\* All seminars are scheduled from 12:00 - 1:30 p.m. ET.  
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Julie Freeman, *ABC, APR*, President

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Register to receive periodic updates of content and Mr. Lukaszewski's public appearance schedule.

[tlg@e911.com](mailto:tlg@e911.com)

To contact Mr. Lukaszewski directly.

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To find out more about IABC programs.

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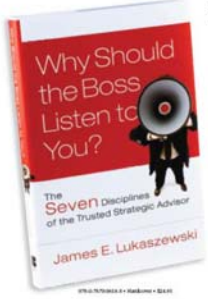
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- Do people hold up meetings waiting for you?
- Do people remember what you say and quote you to others?
- Do others seek out your opinion and ideas?
- Do they try to influence you to influence your boss?

"In more times of great upheaval, this book is a real look at the soul of what good business can be. Everything could be like this, health care, politics, etc. Jim Lukaszewski identifies the boss, your circle, advice, and staff. He then explains each player and how they fit together, where they are coming from, and how you contribute. The big picture is there when you finish. He has some good visuals and many lists."

- 7 disciplines
- 8 negotiators
- 4 things to do
- 6 General strategies
- 9 things a leader expects
- 13 things you need to know to work with a boss
- 2 lists of questions to consider, one training device

**Two more books could be a pamphlet, not this one.** "Managers are better than most," a nice thought. I read the section on how the hell the past 10 years happened, the incredible road of deep moment. His thoughts reveal a life that works. This book of work is a person and I love the book."  
— Dr. Robert, Five Star Reviews on Amazon.com, January 7, 2009

"Leaders never have trained advisors. This book shows you how to be one and stay one."  
— Robert M. Stiller, author of the New York Times #1 bestseller *How to Win the World without Being Extraordinary*

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**Mr. Lukaszewski's books, strategy newsletters, and articles are available at:**

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**Lukaszewski Areas of Practice**

**Problematic Situations  
Beyond the Ordinary in  
Management Communications**

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**Thank You for Attending the IABC Web Seminar  
Wednesday, November 18, 2009**

**Communicating Tough,  
Touchy, Sensitive  
Situations, Dealing With  
High-Level Emotional  
Issues**

**James E. Lukaszewski,  
ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA**

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# COMMUNICATING TOUGH, TOUCHY, SENSITIVE SITUATIONS, DEALING WITH HIGH-LEVEL EMOTIONAL ISSUES

## *Handout*

*A Web Seminar Sponsored by the*

**International Association of  
Business Communicators (IABC)**

*Presented by*


**James E. Lukaszewski,  
ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA**

**Wednesday, November 18, 2009  
12:00 – 1:30 p.m. EST**



## *Contents*

- Answering Tough, Touchy, Sensitive Questions and Responding to Emotional Questioners
- Corrections & Clarifications
- Communication Intentions
- Color Words
- Managing the Victim Dimension of High-Profile Litigation
- Managing the Victim Dimension
- Moving Out of the Target Zone
- Use the Web (Pacific Tomato Example)



The  
Lukaszewski  
Group

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Management Consultants  
In Communications

## **ANSWERING TOUGH, TOUCHY, SENSITIVE QUESTIONS AND RESPONDING TO EMOTIONAL QUESTIONERS<sup>©</sup>**

James E. Lukaszewski, *ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA*  
White Plains, New York, U.S.A.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Presenters often say that the easy part of presentations is handling questions and answers during and at the end of their talks. This enthusiasm is tempered severely when they encounter situations that are extremely difficult and tension filled, usually when the questioner is emotional, irritating, or intentionally trying to embarrass the presenter or disrupt the proceedings. Handling emotional questions is often grueling and gut wrenching.

Emotional questions and emotional responses are most likely when the issues being raised involve health and safety; property values; and quality of life issues such as peace of mind, freedom from fear, and pride in community or family. These issues are mostly emotion driven.

The questions themselves may be relatively straightforward. It is the emotionalization of the question, or bringing up sensitive topics that leads to presenter discomfort and, perhaps, a feeling of inadequacy even fear, in dealing with these situations.

### **A SEVEN-STEP PROCESS**

Remember, every question is important since communication occurs only when someone asks a question and there is an opportunity to answer. Use this seven-step process to respond effectively, humanely, and appropriately to emotionally charged situations. It's a process because the steps impose a purpose, order, and helpful structure for the presenter's answers and, like most process approaches to communication, tend to de-emotionalize the situation.

***Step One: Manage the Emotional Dimension First***

React to the people, animal, and living system dimensions of the question first. If questioners are angry, acknowledge their anger; if questioners are fearful, acknowledge their fear; and if questioners are upset, acknowledge their discomfort.

Examples: “That’s an important question.” “We all can understand why you’re so concerned.” “Health issues are among the most important concerns for each of us.” “I’m sorry you’re so uncomfortable; let me see if I can provide some useful information.” “I’ve heard this truly important question asked and answered a number of times; let me see if I can be of some help.” “Let’s talk it through.”

***Step Two: Give Control to Others***

Emphasize restrictions, controls, regulations, monitoring, oversight, and continuous disclosure ahead of other issues and concerns, or the typical corporate self-forgiving, self-congratulatory language.

Examples: “This may be among the largest facilities of its kind, but it will be one of the most heavily regulated, observed, and monitored.” “The controls, restrictions, and regulations imposed on our operations will be monitored by outside, independent organizations for compliance.” “Independent monitoring combined with public disclosure will provide everyone who’s interested with moment-to-moment information.” “As time passes, we fully expect tough new regulations and even more rigorous restrictions and controls to be imposed.”

Examples to Avoid: Anything that begins with, “We are proud of,” “The facts are,” “This is the only way,” “There are no alternatives,” “It’s only an isolated incident,” “There’s no reason to be fearful,” or “There will be no difference.”

***Step Three: Find a Few Useful Positive Facts / Obligate Yourself***

One of the key lessons of managing emotional situations is recognizing that facts are of only limited value. The inclination of most business people and managers is to pile on the data, believing that objectively produced information, which would convince any rational person, will convince someone in an emotional state. The rule is that data is important but only effective when you can balance the emotional component. Yes, facts and data are important but far less so than dealing directly and empathetically with the emotional issues being faced.

Examples: “There are studies that acknowledge the issue you raise and provide helpful information, such as . . . ” “Our experts have been telling us . . . ” “We have really looked into this question deeply, and the information we have

developed says . . . ” “This is independent information that shows . . . ”  
“We’re responsible for explaining everything we’ve proposed.” “You can count  
on us because it’s our obligation to . . . ” “When you have questions or issues,  
we’re just a phone call or visit away.” “We will find an answer to your  
question.”

**Step Four: *State a Useful Positive Benefit, Gently***

Emphasize how important your information may be to the individual’s situation  
and, perhaps, other sources that might help the individual feel better and have  
more information.

Examples: “While this will be among the largest facilities of its type; it will  
also be one of the most heavily regulated and controlled facilities of its type.”  
“As a condition of obtaining permission, there will be permanent oversight by  
independent, outside individuals and organizations to ensure that promises made  
are promises kept.” “Questions like yours have triggered enormously helpful  
and serious research to find answers.” “This permit or public decision will be  
made only after the community is satisfied that it has imposed sufficient  
restrictions, regulations, oversight, and controls.”

With limited enthusiasm: “Some jobs will be created in . . . ” “The economic  
benefit will be substantial.” “The local economy will benefit by . . . ”

**Step Five: *Tell the Truth / State or Acknowledge the Negatives:***

Address the health, environmental, and community issues forthrightly.

Examples: “From our perspective, we are doing everything we can to address  
the issues you are raising, and the proof will be when we . . . ” “Yes, the trains  
will be longer; there will be more emissions in these areas, but there will also be  
fewer pollutants by thousands of tons.” “Overall mercury will decline 37  
percent; however, the use of Western coal will raise the emission of mercury by  
about X pounds per year over present levels.”

**Step Six: *Make Credible Comparisons***

Accommodate personal feelings; try to avoid analogies by instead comparing  
“appropriate” and “like” situations and facts. “What other information can we  
provide?”

Examples: “A plant of similar size, but gas powered, employs 34 people versus  
120 people for coal-fueled units.” “Comparing coal-fueled plants to gas-fueled  
plants: The coal-fueled plants cost more to build, but the operating and expense  
elements are approximately the same. It’s the extraordinary spiking and  
relentless growth of gas prices that makes coal the better choice.”

### **Step Seven: Consensus/Solution (Optional)**

If you are particularly successful in communicating with the individual or group on the emotional issue, you could move toward an acknowledged mutual understanding by suggesting positions or answers the emotional, adversarial questioner might see as mutually beneficial or that would move the process ahead.

Examples: “Have I responded to the issues that were making you uncomfortable?” “What was most important from your perspective?” “Has what I said been helpful?” “Was there anything that you found especially useful?” “If we modify X or Y in the manner you suggest, would that help you feel less concerned?” “What specifically would resolve your questions?”

### **SOME GENERAL THOUGHTS**

1. **Focus Forward:** Always answer the question as though it was the first time you have heard it, even if you just answered the same question a few minutes before. Rather than directing people back to the content of your presentation or remarks, treat the question as if it were brand new and answer it from the stand point of now, and what’s next. This will help you avoid the use of negative language.
2. **Stay Positive:** The greatest emotional trigger in adversarial situations is the use of negative language or negative responses such as: “That’s not true,” “I never said that,” “That’s not what I meant,” “You weren’t listening,” “That’s not our fault,” “We didn’t mean it that way,” “That couldn’t happen,” and “We would never do that.”

Find the positive alternative in every case, or you stoke the fires of emotion and antagonism.

3. **Put Yourself in Their Shoes Every Time:** The ability to have this level of empathetic response is one of the most important aspects of moving through an emotional questioning situation.
4. **Control Your Own Emotions:** Avoid taking inflammatory language and emotionally charged words, such as “ashamed,” “embarrassed,” “humiliated,” “bad,” “ugly,” “weird,” “worried,” and “scum,” personally. They are just words. Instead, move to answer the question and counteract your emotional reaction by focusing on a positive declarative response.
5. **Always Worry When They Throw Sticks and Stones:** Words rarely hurt unless you let them.
6. **Defuse the Situation:** “Let’s talk it through.” “Let’s look at the situation step-by-step.” “Let’s examine your question systematically, one element at a time.”

## **CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS: A SHORT COURSE**

Giving interviews is necessary but can be risky. One of an interviewee's greatest frustrations, especially with print news stories, is what the reporter and editor may do with the answers he or she gives. With broadcast stories, it's what the reporter leaves out that is of most concern. With critics, competitors, and complainers, it's how much confusion, emotion, and allegation they can get into a story about you.

- What if the reporter makes a mistake?
- What if the reporter leaves really important things out of the story?
- If the reporter does make errors and mistakes, how do you effectively correct them? Or should you?
- What do you do about unrelated, confusing, negative, sensational, or competitive ideas that creep into the story?
- What if the story is just plain wrong?

We advocate a Web-based technique we call "Corrections & Clarifications" where a print story or the transcript of a broadcast news story is laid out in such a way that it can be effectively corrected and clarified. These corrections and clarifications are then put on a Web site, and often also e-mailed to key stakeholders and stakeholder groups. This approach allows us to avoid the restrictions that letters to the editor, op-eds, and other media-dominated or controlled response mechanisms tend to place on our ability to have correct information on-the-record and available promptly to the publics we care about. This response technique works equally well with flyers, letters, news releases, video news releases, and white papers from those who oppose us in critical high-profile situations.

Why do this? As neat as this idea is, when first suggested, almost every client wants to know why anyone would put bad stuff, of any kind, up on the Web, for any reason. Their question is, "Won't this just make it available to lots more people and critics?" Here are five reasons why you should do this:

1. Your record is your responsibility. The public perception of your record is also your responsibility. This strategy manages both the public perception and the record.
2. Constructive approaches control the tone of debate, discussion, and differences of opinion.
3. Your constituents expect you to do this.
4. Honorable people can, and should, answer any and all questions.
5. The technique tends to script everyone – constituents, critics, the media, and commentators.

Face it, the media can use very little of what you give them, and they will choose what they want to use. Often the reporter or editor will leave the most important information out of the story. Control your own destiny.

Here's how we implement the technique.

- Step One** Analyze the article, transcript, or document and highlight the words, phrases, or statements that need correction and clarification.
- Step Two** Reformat the article, transcript, or document (if you can) so it will appear as a single column of text in paragraph format on the left side of the page or Web-site screen.
- Step Three** Use a bold typeface to highlight the words, phrases, or statements on the left side of the page that you wish to correct or clarify.
- Step Four** On the right side of the page, directly across from the words you highlighted on the left, insert approved, corrected, or clarified response language.
- Step Five** As new issues arise or new subjects appear, develop approved language to clarify and continue the process.

The models that follow are all taken from real-life stories and situations. Careful comparison of article text to the clarification will show you why this dispassionate technique, hammered home again and again, can be so successful in managing difficult, very public situations.

Always follow these general guidelines for all corrections and clarifications:

1. Use positive, declarative language. Avoid or eliminate all negative and emotional words and phrases.
2. Keep your cool. All statements should have a positive, declarative tone. The approach here is to correct and to clarify rather than to debate and counterpunch. This is where our real power comes from.
3. Categorize officially approved statements into specific topic areas. While time consuming and somewhat cumbersome at first, soon you will have more than enough pre-approved positive material to respond quickly to new articles or other information released by the media or those who hope to discredit you.
4. Constantly remember that the primary goal here is to script those who are interested in keeping the record straight with useful, helpful, and correct information.

Keep in mind that the groups most likely to visit your Web site frequently are reporters, opposing attorneys, your universe of audiences, and other self-appointed, self-anointed outsiders who have an interest in your issue or situation. The largest group of visitors, however, will be your employees and those directly affected by the situation at hand. Experience demonstrates that Web placement rarely enlarges an audience base, but does build trust and neutrality in the base audiences you care about.

Three sample "Correction & Clarification" models based on real-life circumstances follow. Most are excerpted from actual documents or Web sites. They are used here with permission.

### **Description**

1. Power Plants and Air Pollution
2. North Carolina School of the Arts
3. Champion Paper Mill: There Are No Options

## Correction & Clarification Model #1

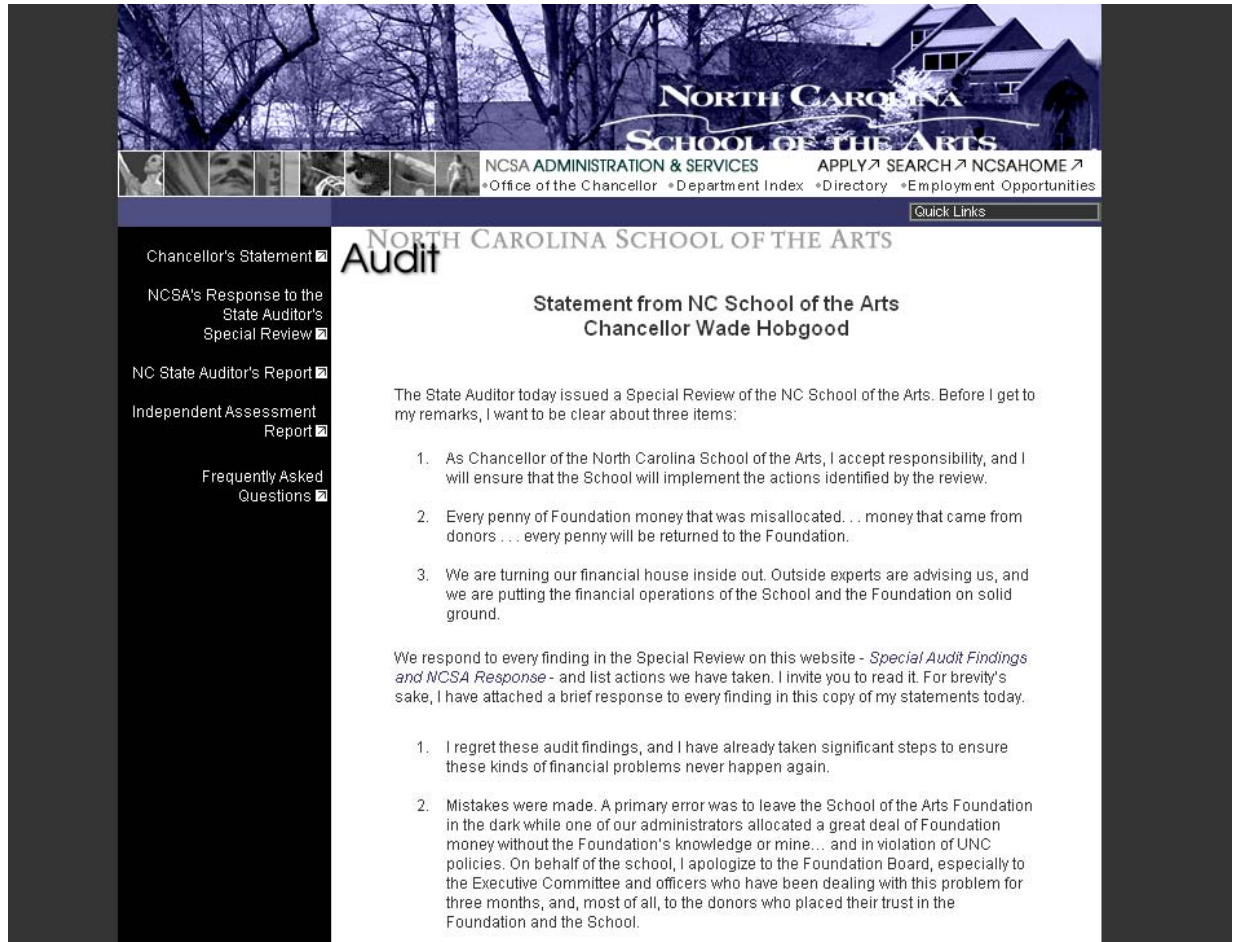
### Article Text

### Corrections & Clarifications


<b>1</b>	<p><b>Power Plants and Air Pollution</b></p> <p><b>Electric utilities are a major source of air pollutants that affect lung health, including sulfur dioxide, a powerful asthma trigger, and nitrogen oxide, which is a component of ozone smog.</b> Air quality experts nationwide have identified reducing emissions from power plants as a technologically feasible, cost-effective approach to achieving cleaner air.</p>	<p><i>Clean Power</i> is about building new, advanced power plants and reducing emissions from our existing power plants as a result. The expanded Maple Corner units will be equipped with the best modern proven technology and, as a result, the plant will be one of the cleanest of its type in the country.</p> <p>The dramatic and important reductions in emissions, assured by the construction of these new facilities, will help southeastern Tennessee achieve ozone attainment. New, high technology wet scrubber and emission control systems will reduce not only the potential for ozone, but reduce significantly the precursors, which lead to ozone formation.</p> <p>According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) report on ozone, <a href="http://www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/gooduphigh/">http://www.epa.gov/oar/oaqps/gooduphigh/</a>, the major sources of nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) and volatile organic compounds (VOC) include motor vehicle exhaust, industrial emissions, gasoline vapors, and chemical solvents.</p> <p>To break it down further, the major sources of NO<sub>x</sub> include motor vehicles (49 percent), utilities (28 percent), industrial / commercial processes (13 percent), and other sources (5 percent). The major sources of VOC include industrial / commercial processes (58 percent), motor vehicles (37 percent), and chemical solvents (5 percent).</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Electric utilities produce 66% of all sulfur dioxide emissions nationwide.</b> Even brief exposure to relatively low levels of sulfur dioxide has been repeatedly shown to trigger attacks in people with asthma. Sulfur dioxide also contributes to the formation of fine particles, and to acid rain.</p>	<p>The most effective approach to attainment would be to go after the greatest source of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide – cars and diesel trucks.</p> <p>The generating units at the Maple Corner Power Plant will be among the cleanest of their type in the country, and will remove 95 percent of sulfur dioxide. By 2013, our system-wide emissions of sulfur dioxide will be reduced by more than 65 percent.</p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Power plants are also the source of 29% of nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions.</b> NO<sub>x</sub> is a major component of ozone smog and fine particulate matter, which affect the health of millions of Americans across wide areas of the country.</p>	<p>The generating units at the Maple Corner Power Plant will also remove 85 percent of nitrogen oxide. By 2013, our system-wide emissions of nitrogen oxides will be reduced by more than 65 percent.</p> <p>According to the EPA, the major sources of NO<sub>x</sub> include motor vehicles (49 percent), utilities (28 percent), industrial / commercial processes (13 percent), and other sources (5 percent).</p>


## Correction & Clarification Model #2


<http://www.ncarts.edu> – North Carolina School of the Arts





The screenshot shows the website for the North Carolina School of the Arts. At the top, there is a banner with the school's name and a navigation menu including "NCSA ADMINISTRATION & SERVICES", "APPLY", "SEARCH", "NCSAHOME", "Office of the Chancellor", "Department Index", "Directory", and "Employment Opportunities". Below the banner is a "Quick Links" section. The main content area is titled "Audit" and features a "Statement from NC School of the Arts Chancellor Wade Hobgood". The statement addresses a special review by the State Auditor and lists three key points: accepting responsibility, returning misallocated money, and turning financial operations inside out. It also includes a response to findings and a list of corrective actions.

**Chancellor's Statement** 

NCSA's Response to the State Auditor's Special Review 

NC State Auditor's Report 

Independent Assessment Report 

Frequently Asked Questions 

### Audit

#### Statement from NC School of the Arts Chancellor Wade Hobgood

The State Auditor today issued a Special Review of the NC School of the Arts. Before I get to my remarks, I want to be clear about three items:

1. As Chancellor of the North Carolina School of the Arts, I accept responsibility, and I will ensure that the School will implement the actions identified by the review.
2. Every penny of Foundation money that was misallocated. . . money that came from donors . . . every penny will be returned to the Foundation.
3. We are turning our financial house inside out. Outside experts are advising us, and we are putting the financial operations of the School and the Foundation on solid ground.

We respond to every finding in the Special Review on this website - *Special Audit Findings and NCSA Response* - and list actions we have taken. I invite you to read it. For brevity's sake, I have attached a brief response to every finding in this copy of my statements today.

1. I regret these audit findings, and I have already taken significant steps to ensure these kinds of financial problems never happen again.
2. Mistakes were made. A primary error was to leave the School of the Arts Foundation in the dark while one of our administrators allocated a great deal of Foundation money without the Foundation's knowledge or mine. . . and in violation of UNC policies. On behalf of the school, I apologize to the Foundation Board, especially to the Executive Committee and officers who have been dealing with this problem for three months, and, most of all, to the donors who placed their trust in the Foundation and the School.

# Correction & Clarification Model #3

## Champion Paper Mill

Vote No  
On Ballot Issue 17  
The Proposed Zoning Plan

# Unfortunately, This Article Is Wrong.

# There Are No Options To The Reily Township Landfill Site.



After July 1, 1988,  
Hodapp *could* be an  
emergency temporary storage site. That's all.

## Hodapp storage—a temporary measure

- Storing dry materials at Hodapp is only a temporary measure designed to keep the Champion Mill At Hamilton! open. It is not, and never was, a long-term solution.
- If the government fails to act in a timely manner, or the residents of Reily Township pass the proposed zoning plan, Champion will do whatever it takes to keep the mill operating. We will store the non-hazardous, non-toxic papermaking waste under tarps in our parking lots if necessary.
- Storage at Hodapp, or any other temporary site, is only an emergency measure...to keep the mill operating.
- Alternative storage facilities, such as existing landfills, are not an option because of the potential liability created when other companies have access to the same facility. We've said this time and time again.
- The article shown on the facing page accurately portrays the passion of the meeting, but selectively implies there are alternative sites. Champion has investigated virtually every alternative and continues to believe that Reily Township Site #49 is the only viable site.

**We're running out of time.**

The Champion Mill At Hamilton! Ohio

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## COMMUNICATION INTENTIONS

1. *Candor*
  - Disclose, announce early.
  - Explain reasoning and reasons.
  - Discuss options, alternatives considered.
  - Provide unsolicited helpful information.
2. *Openness, accessibility*
  - Be available.
  - Be willing to respond.
3. *Truthfulness*
  - Point of reference matters more than facts.
  - Unconditional honesty, from the start.
4. *Apology*
  - Verbalize or write a statement of personal regret, remorse, and sorrow.
  - Acknowledge personal responsibility for having injured, insulted, failed, or wronged another.
  - Humbly ask for forgiveness in exchange for more appropriate future behavior and to make amends in return.
5. *Responsiveness*
  - Every concern or question, regardless of the source, is legitimate and must be addressed.
  - Answer every question; avoid judging the questioner.
  - Avoid taking any question personally.
  - Build followers and be nice, even in the face of anger or aggressive negativity. Anger and arrogance create plaintiffs.
6. *Empathy*
  - Action always speaks louder than words.
  - Action illustrates concern, sensitivity, and compassion.
  - Act as though it was happening to you or someone you care about.
7. *Transparency*
  - Our behavior, our attitude, our plans, even our strategic discussions are unchallengeable, positive, and explainable.
  - Our families would be comfortable reading about our actions, decisions, and discussions on the front page of tomorrow's newspaper.
  - No secrets (because important things and stupid stuff always come out).
8. *Engagement*
  - Face-to-face is the communications approach desired by just about everyone.
  - Those who challenge us most will require aggressive positive interaction.
  - Our base and those who give us permission to operate expect us to deal with unconvinced and victims.
  - Direct interactive response, even negotiation, empowers the initiator.
9. *Clarification and Correction*
  - Relentlessly correct and clarify the record.
  - Prompt, positive, constructive elaboration of the facts preempts critics and empowers employees and supporters.

## COLOR WORDS: Negative Emotional Words

Afraid	Delinquent	Harmful	Sad
Agitated	Demean	Hateful	Sarcastic
Aggravate	Deny	Hopeless	Scared
Alarmed	Despair	Hostile	Scum
Alleged	Desperation	Humiliated	Self-pity
Anger	Despicable	Hurt	Selfish
Angry	Destroy	Icky	Sellout
Anguish	Destructive	Idiot	Sham
Antagonize	Deteriorate	Ignorant	Shame
Anxious	Disappointed	Immature	Shameful
Apathetic	Disarray	Incompetent	Shatter
Appalled	Discontented	Inept	Sick
Apprehensive	Discouraged	Inappropriate	Silly
Argue	Discriminate	Irritated	Sissy
Arrogant	Disdain	Lies	Skunk
Ashamed	Disgusted	Litigate	Slander
Assassinate	Dismiss	Lousy	Slash
Attack	Disrespect	Mad	Sloppy
Awful	Distorted	Mangled	Stinky
Bad	Distraught	Mangy	Struggle
Betrayed	Disturbed	Manipulate	Stupid
Blame	Dopey	Mean	Surrender
Blasted	Doubtful	Meek	Tampering
Bombs	Dumb	Messy	Tarnish
Bored	Duplicity	Minimize	Tense
Botched	Ecotage	Miserable	Terrible
Brainwashed	Embarrassed	Monopoly	Terrified
Bungled	Embattled	Nag	Terror-stricken
Buried	Endanger	Negligent	Terrorized
Capitulate	Enraged	Out-of-touch	Threatened
Catastrophic	Evil	Overwhelmed	Toxic
Collusion	Eviscerate	Overzealous	Tragic
Conceal	Excessive	Outrageous	Traitor
Confused	Exaggerate	Painful	Tumultuous
Conspire	Exposed	Panicky	Ugly
Contempt	Face-saving	Petrified	Unbelievable
Corrosive	Fat	Pitiful	Uncomfortable
Cover-up	Fearful	Poisonous	Underhanded
Cringe	Fight	Profiteering	Undermine
Critical	Foolish	Questionable	Uneasy
Crooked	Frightened	Racist	Unhappy
Curious	Frustrating	Regret	Unimportant
Damaging	Furious	Repudiate	Unlucky
Danger	Goofy	Resentful	Unnecessary
Deadly	Gratuitous	Resigned	Unreal
Deceitful	Greedy	Rip-off	Unsure
Defeated	Guilty	Rotten	Weird
Defective	Harassed	Sabotage	Worried
Defensive			

# MANAGING THE VICTIM DIMENSION OF HIGH-PROFILE LITIGATION

**Luncheon Address**  
**by**  
**James E. Lukaszewski, ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA**

**Friday, March 3, 2006**

**Before the**  
*Minnesota Bar Association*  
*Continuing Legal Education Conference*

**Minneapolis, Minnesota**

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. This particular discussion is going to be pretty far removed from the concerns of your day, trademark law. But the issues we'll talk about may be of greater importance than anything else you might learn during this program. That's because we're talking about those significant events that produce victims or victimization. If there is one thing business professionals and their advisors do very poorly, it is victim management.

This afternoon I'll talk about three related topics:

1. The nature of victimization.
2. The behavior of management and their advisors that triggers, initiates, or prolongs victimization.
3. What victims need and constructive strategies that can resolve these different situations quickly, often without litigation.

Let me prepare you for our conversation today with a little story. It's from a legendary television series called *Paper Chase*. Perhaps some of you remember it. The lead actor was John Houseman. He played "Professor Kingsfield," who taught a first-year law school course on contracts. There was a powerful vignette in one of the early programs in which "Professor Kingsfield," inspiring the class, said, "You come to me with minds of mush . . . and you leave here thinking like lawyers." Well, let me tell you that for this particular presentation, you all come to me with finely trained legal minds, but you will leave this session with minds of mush. So, get ready.

The highest priority and greatest threat, the most crucial aspect of managing crises, is the victim dimension. Victims provide the explosive emotional drive that results in high visibility, high liability, and high anxiety. Even though victimization occurs every day, and to some degree may play a role in all litigation, dealing with victims still remains among the sloppiest, most mysterious, and least well handled of all management activities.

There are seven powerful reasons why managing victims is so difficult for management and those who advise management:

1. Victim behavior is irrational.
2. Management is reluctant to promptly assume blame or responsibility.
3. Management's obsession with results over something that is clearly emotional, and by-in-large immeasurable, forces them to appear anti-victim, emotionless, and cold.
4. Management training in ethics and managing emotional circumstances is at best minimal in business schools and in business life.
5. Expectations and performance measures of managers and management advisors is generally based on rational factors.
6. Management relies on peer and legal advice to avoid apology.
7. Managers responding with empathy and sympathy can be criticized as "soft," "sentimental," even as "sissies."

In America today, the process of becoming a manager is training in de-emotionalization. Simply put, if it can't be easily measured, if it's difficult to quantify, or if it can't be metricized, it's probably not important. On top of this, managers are trained to discount, disregard, and disrespect virtually every kind of emotional expression. Peers, shareholders, and the business community expect managers to "tough it out," and "avoid looking like sissies," at least at first. It is okay to "give in" after victims have been insulted, demeaned, and slapped around a bit. The result is that management's response to crisis often comes across for what it surely is, callous, arrogant, cold, and heartless. Managers are not compensated on their level of empathy.

Going one step further, business people are taught a kind of decision-making ritual – one in which even the most urgent decisions are made through a process of conflict, confrontation, and aggressive intellectual and verbal combat. Looked at through the lens of victimization, this approach is time consuming and distracts from the humane immediacy victim response requires. Too much delay and the perceptions of arrogance, callousness, and culpability take over, especially if management hesitates or is initially hostile and negative toward victims.

In crises, one crucial strategic responsibility of company leadership is to have in place a Victim Response Unit and Special Victim Action Team, reflecting participation by communications, the Legal Department, and Human Resources, to immediately help management avoid both the collateral damage and devastating consequences of mismanaging the victim dimension; and to keep management focused on the significant benefits to reputation, public trust, and legal liability reduction that will be achieved by prompt, empathetic, and apologetic managing of victims.

### ***Crises and Disasters Create Many Kinds of Victims***

Almost every post-mortem on crisis communication failure and management decision making deficiencies identifies the failure to promptly address victims as the emotionally negative energizing force that causes trust to break down. Bad news of any consequence is about victims and victimization, or the potential for both.

When the emotionality of victimization meets the rational decision making of management, the casualties will almost always be in management.

It is helpful to differentiate between a crisis and a disaster. Crises are caused by human beings through commission, omission, accident, negligence, or ignorance. Disasters are generally natural events beyond human control – tsunamis, earthquakes, hurricanes, tornados, and incredibly powerful storms. Disasters produce victims, but unless responders act negatively, carelessly, or callously, there is far less potential for blame, bad news, or mindless victimization and collateral damage.

### **Who Can't Be a Victim?**

Let's do some demystification. Corporations and large organizations, like government agencies, are almost never, from a public perspective, considered victims. Yes, Tylenol was a victim of a product tampering criminal in 1982 and 1986. Yes, the airlines whose planes were hijacked and flown into the World Trade Center in 2001 were victims. The syringe tampering incidents in 1993 made Pepsi, an icon American brand, a victim. The government building bombed in Oklahoma City in 1996 was also a victim. Yes, there are circumstances – although very few in number – where one could genuinely consider a large organization and its leadership to be victims. But lawyers, corporate advisors, and senior executives don't qualify.

Generally speaking, however, it is more likely that large organizations will be immediately viewed as perpetrators, or at least as having some culpability in the creation of victims. In these situations it is equally true, but perhaps not as intuitively apparent, that some employees are victims in every scenario. If the response of the organization is to stumble, mumble, fumble, and bumble, any opportunity to be perceived as a victim is lost.

Management advisors, especially attorneys, need to recognize the crucial and important realities of the victim dimension, and be prepared to coach management for victim response readiness and for the important humane behaviors required as crises unfold.

### **Who Can Be a Victim?**

There are three kinds of victims: people, animals, and living systems. Living systems are things like estuaries, deserts, jungles, rain forests, river valleys, or your own back yard. The fact is you can blow something up, burn something down, or destroy it, but so long as no one is injured or killed, no animals are injured or killed, and no one's living system is harmed, the situation may be bad news, but is not a crisis. Instead, it could be a disaster or simply a bad day for someone's schedule, budget, reputation, or career.

### **What Does It Mean to Be a Victim?**

**Victimhood is a self-designated state.** Whether there are wounds, bullet holes, or any other visible or invisible damage, human beings have the capacity to choose to feel victimized. They can also choose to be victimized on behalf of others, like animals or other living systems.

***Victimhood is self-sustaining.*** Being a victim is a self-perpetuating state. That is, the individual chooses how long he or she will remain in a situation or state of mind that makes him or her feel victimized.

***Victimhood is self-terminating.*** It ends when the victims, by themselves, determine to let go of what is affecting them and get on with the rest of their lives.

No matter how damaging an event, only a small number of individuals will actually feel victimized. This is true even in mass casualty situations. While many may be injured, or disadvantaged, or require extraordinary assistance, very few blame others for their feelings of helplessness, demoralization, frustration, or betrayal. Most injured or wounded just suck it up, deal with it, and move on with their lives.

***Victims suffer alone.*** Being a victim is an individual state. Even though there may be mass casualty circumstances where many are injured or wounded at the same time, each person suffers alone. Even the phrase “mass casualties” is a serious, potentially devastating misnomer. Every person suffers differently, experiences pain differently, and needs to be treated individually. Too often, the victimization, the sense of frustration, the sense of helplessness and being misunderstood persists because both the perpetrators and society lump individual circumstance together, too quickly. This is very frustrating to victims.

### ***Victim Behavior Is Predictable: Key Indicators***

***Victims’ behaviors are driven by extraordinary powerful emotion.*** There is anger, betrayal, disbelief, dread, and fear. There is frustration, powerlessness, and helplessness. There is inadequacy, and the agony of walking-but-wounded loneliness. In fact, these words are the vocabulary of the victimized.

***Victims become intellectually deaf.*** When humans are victimized, the first thing that happens is the inner voice begins screaming, telling us just exactly what happened, how stupid we were, how careless we probably had to be to get into this kind of jam. Our other voice (most of us have the two voices; some of you may have more, but most of us have just two) is telling everyone else about what you are suffering and what is happening to you. This is what often makes dealing with victims so difficult. Victims instantly become self-absorbed and self-focused on the problems and afflictions that being a victim causes. They hear little. Their inner voice continuously rehearses their problems and circumstances. They use their outer voice to complain, whine, and warn. They notice little, and they are primarily stimulated by additional negative information about their circumstances or similar ideas.

***Victims are emotionally engaged 24/7.*** Put yourself in their place. If you are an adult, you have been victimized by something. Once it happened to you, you were consumed by it, at least for a time.

***Everything is a question.*** Victims fail to efficiently absorb information from the outside due to their condition of intellectual deafness, victims generally ask many, many embarrassing

but simple questions like, “Who’s responsible?” “Why did this happen to me?” “Why couldn’t this have been prevented?” “Surely there must have been some alternatives that would have headed off this problem before it happened.” “Who is going to pay all my bills while I suffer these problems?” “Why didn’t you warn me if you knew this could happen?”

### ***Victim (Plaintiff) Creating Perpetrator Behaviors***

Victim-creating behaviors cause most litigation. They are identifiable and preventable. Here are seven victim-causing perpetrator behaviors (I refer to these in some places as “profiles in Jell-O”):

1. ***Denial***: Refusal to accept that something bad has happened; that there may be victims or others directly affected that require prompt public acknowledgement. There is denial that the crisis is serious; denial that the media or public have any real stake or interest in whatever the problem happens to be; denial that the situation should take anyone's time in the organization except those in top management specifically tasked to deal with it; denial that the problem is of any particular consequence to the organization provided no one talks about it except those directly involved. “Let’s not over-react.” “Let’s keep it to ourselves.” “We don’t need to tell the people in public affairs and public relations just yet. They’ll just blab it all over.” “If we don’t talk, no one will know.”

2. ***Victim Confusion***: Irritable reaction to reporters, employees, angry neighbors, whistle-blowers, and victims’ families when they call asking for help, information, explanation, or apology. “Hey! We’re victims too.”

Symptoms include time-wasting explanations of how we’ve been such good corporate citizens, how we’ve contributed to the opera, the little league, the shelter program. “We don’t deserve to be treated this badly.” “Mistakes can happen, even to the best of companies.” “We’re only human.”

When these behaviors don’t pass the community, media, or victim straight face test, or are criticized or laughed at, a stream of defensive threats follows:

- “If the government enforces this regulation, it will destroy our competitiveness.”
- “If we have to close this plant, it’s their fault.” “It’s the only decision we can make.”
- “If this decision stands, many will suffer needlessly.”
- “If we didn’t do this, someone else would.”
- “We didn’t tell them to spare them the additional agony.”

3. ***Testosterosis***: Look for ways to hit back, to “slap some sense” into them, rather than to deal with problems and emotional circumstances. Refuse to give in; refuse to respect those who may have a difference of opinion or a legitimate issue.

There is extraordinary negative energy inside the executive circle. That’s what testosterosis really is . . . an attack of abusive adrenaline. Another definitive indicator, the use of military terminology – tactics, strategy, enemy, beachhead, attack,

retreat, and truce – builds a macho internal environment. This command and control mentality sets the stage for predictable errors, omissions, and mistakes, and resist to what is truly needed.

4. **Arrogance:** Reluctance to apologize, express concern or empathy, or to take appropriate responsibility because, “If we do that, we’ll be liable,” or, “We’ll look like sissies,” or, “We’ll set bad precedents,” or, “There’ll be copycats,” or, “We’ll legitimize bad actions or people,” or “We can’t give them what they don’t deserve.” Arrogance is contempt for adversaries, sometimes even for victims, and almost always for the news media. It is the opposite of empathy.
5. **Blame Shifting / Search for the Guilty:** Dig into the organization or community to look for traitors, turncoats, troublemakers, those who push back, and the unconvinced to shift the blame to them. You know it’s happening when you hear these phrases:
  - “They simply weren’t damaged enough to warrant the demands they’re making.”
  - “The allegations are outrageous, unprovable, and self-serving.”
  - “Obviously, these people have their own agenda, and we have become the victim of it.”
6. **Fear of Exposure:** As the bad news coverage and employee animosity persists, the media and victims begin asking, “What did you know, and when did you know it?”, “What have you done, and when did you do it?”, along with other humiliating, embarrassing, and damaging questions. Angry, callous responses create even more victims, or harden the attitudes of existing victims. And the plaintiffs’ attorneys line up.
7. **Management by Whining Around:** When the decision is made to finally make some accommodation and move toward settlement, the organization talks only about its own pain, expense, and inconvenience. This makes victims, employees, neighbors, and the government angrier, and the media more aggressively negative, creating even more plaintiffs and accusations. Whining is never an effective strategic tool or strategy.

### **What Do Victims Need?**

Victims have four powerful needs. If these four needs are provided promptly – preferably by the perpetrator – victims will more easily move through their state of victimization and be less likely to call or respond to attorneys, the media, or even to call attention to themselves. The reality is that if the perpetrator fails to meet their needs or does so only partially, victims will find ways to provide them for themselves, often at the perpetrator’s expense.

- **Validation**, that they are indeed victims. This recognition is best rendered by the perpetrator; if not, public groups, government, or the news media will do it.
- **Visibility**, a platform from which to describe their pain and warn others. Preferably, again, the platform should come from the perpetrator, or a credible independent

organization that can help the victim explain what happened, both for the purpose of talking it out and also convincing others to avoid similar risks or take appropriate preventive action.

- **Vindication**, through action by the perpetrator to ensure that whatever happened to the victim will never be allowed to happen to others. Victims rarely sue because they are angry, their life has been changed dramatically, or because lots of plaintiff's attorneys are chasing them around. Generally, victims sue because their situation is not acknowledged and their feelings are ignored, belittled, or trivialized. If they are prevented from publicly discussing what happened to them in meaningful ways, and no one is taking prompt constructive action to prevent similarly situated individuals, animals, or living systems from suffering the same fate, they will be looking to take more aggressive action.
- **Apology**, directly and promptly tends to dramatically reduce victimization and virtually eliminate litigation. While the lawyers may strongly advise against any form of apology because, under law, an apology is an admission, there is a growing body of evidence and data to demonstrate that apologies, promptly and sincerely delivered, virtually eliminate the potential for litigation. This means that while the lawyer's advice needs to be listened to, if the victim refuses to sue, it may be time to reassign the lawyer to negotiating an effective settlement rather than pursuing a futile effort to deny what the victim needs most.

### ***Apology and Prompt Disclosure Are Arrogance Reduction Strategies That Also Reduce Risk***

An article published in *Annals of Internal Medicine* on December 21, 1999 outlined a new litigation risk reduction strategy: Keep the patient in the information loop, aggressively, constantly, no matter what, especially when mistakes and errors occur. The organization involved was the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. The VA's new risk management strategy was called "Extreme Honesty."<sup>5.1</sup>

### **Humanistic Risk Management**

For the first time, a credible organization purposely adopted a strategy designed to reduce liability, litigation, and threats to reputation, and could validate something every victim seeks to be able to do – deal honestly, openly, fairly, and truthfully with various constituencies, especially when bad things happen. In the paper's abstract, the authors discuss what they call "humanistic risk management." This includes "early injury review, steadfast maintenance of the relationship between the hospital and the patient, proactive full disclosure to patients who have been injured because of accidents or medical negligence, and fair compensation for injuries." This is trust building and maintaining behavior.

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<sup>5.1</sup> To request reprints of the *Annals of Internal Medicine* article, "Risk Management: Extreme Honesty May Be the Best Policy," December 1999, 131:963-96, contact Steve S. Kraman, M.D., Veteran's Affairs Medical Center, 2250 Leestown Road, Lexington, Kentucky 40511, 215.351.2657.

## **Victim Management**

The greatest barrier to disclosure and appropriate victim attitude management is management's fear of liability, fostered by well-meaning but misguided counsel. Any credible way to reduce or mitigate this fear is essential to better behavior, reputation management, and litigation reduction.

The lawyer's first assumption, now well ingrained in management, is that total honesty and candor in situations of omission, commission, error, and negligence can only lead to higher liability. The data in this article tend to refute that, saying essentially that the liability performance of the Lexington facility is better than other comparable facilities that rely on secrecy, denial, even deception.

The "Extreme Honesty" article also mentioned a study published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* in 1992 that examined why 127 families sued their healthcare providers for perinatal injuries<sup>5.2</sup>: "Of 127 families who sued, 43 percent were motivated by the suspicion of a cover-up or by the desire for revenge. Another study of 149 randomly selected patients in an academic internal medicine practice found that almost all the respondents "wanted their physicians to acknowledge even minor errors; many stated that they would respond to an unacknowledged moderate or severe mistake by filing a lawsuit."

One lawyer interviewed for the article put it this way: "In over 25 years of representing both physicians and patients, it became apparent that a large percentage of patient dissatisfaction was generated by physician attitude and denial, rather than the negligence itself. In fact, my experience has been that close to half of malpractice cases could have been avoided through disclosure or apology but instead were relegated to litigation. What the majority of patients really wanted was simply an honest explanation of what happened, and if appropriate, an apology. Unfortunately, when they were not only offered neither but were rejected as well, they felt doubly wronged and then sought legal counsel."

If you simply substitute the word "victim" for "patient" in U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' four-step "Extreme Honesty" process, you have the basis for a major lesson in reputation preservation for your company or organization.

### ***Extreme Honesty: How This Process Works at the VA***

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs uses a four-step process to notify patients of negligence:

1. Risk management committee:
  - Identifies an instance of accident, negligence, or malpractice.

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<sup>5.2</sup> Hickson GB, Clayton EW, Githens PB, Sloan FA. Factors that prompted families to file medical malpractice claims following perinatal injuries, *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* 1992; 267: 1359-63.

- Investigates the facts.
  - Interviews involved physicians, the chief of relevant clinical service, and other personnel.
2. If the Committee finds malpractice or substantial error (resulted in loss of patient's function, earning capacity, or life):
    - Plans are made to notify the patient or next-of-kin.
    - Patient's surrogate or next-of-kin is called (usually by the chief of staff).
    - Family is told that there was a problem with the care in question and is asked to come to the medical center at their convenience for an explanation.
    - Telephone conversation provides just enough details to indicate the seriousness of the matter (including, if necessary, a statement that a medical mistake was made and that an attorney may accompany the patient or family, if desired).
  3. Face-to-face meeting:
    - With the chief of staff, the facility attorney, the quality manager, the quality management nurse, and sometimes the facility director.
    - All details are provided as sensitively as possible, including the identities of persons involved in the incident.
    - Emphasis is placed on the regret of the institution and the personnel involved; and on any corrective action that was taken to prevent similar events.
    - Offer to answer questions and an offer of restitution, along with subsequent medical or surgical treatment.
    - Assistance with filing for service connection under 38 United States Code, section 1151.
  4. Claims assistance:
    - Patient, surrogate, or next-of-kin is assisted in filing the necessary forms.
    - Victim is given the names and phone numbers of persons who can answer any additional questions.
    - Patient or next-of-kin is advised to retain counsel, if they haven't all ready.
    - Committee is forthcoming to the plaintiff's attorney so that the attorney's review of the medical record will confirm the information that was volunteered.
    - The facility's attorney and the patient's attorney work together to reach an equitable settlement on the basis of "reasonable calculation of loss."

### ***Recent Developments***

Saying "I'm sorry," is becoming a mainstay in healthcare communication, triggered by the healthcare insurers, who have suddenly begun to realize that apologies promptly and sincerely delivered, by all parties to an adverse medical event can significantly reduce, if not eliminate litigation. If you go to your favorite browser and click on "sorryworks.net" you'll come across a huge site involving a tremendous number of hospitals and healthcare organizations from across

the United States, all of whom are joining in the chorus to urge doctors, lawyers, and medical administrators to engage in what is called in medical shorthand, the “I’m sorry” movement.

The pressure to do this is so great that in an increasing number of cases, failure to apologize promptly at the first sign of a medical problem could void a doctor’s liability coverage and coverage to pay any attorney who might defend that physician or healthcare institution.

On September 28, 2005, Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York and Senator Barack Obama of Illinois jointly introduced the “National Medical Error Disclosure and Compensation Act of 2005.” The introduction of this legislation reads, in part, “Solutions to patient safety, litigation, and medical liability insurance problems, while challenging, are critical. In an attempt to address these issues, a number of hospital systems and private liability insurance companies around the country have adopted a policy of robust disclosure of medical errors with thorough analysis and intervention, apologies for such errors and early compensation for patient injury.”

“Overall, these policies have resulted in greater patient trust and satisfaction, more patients being compensated for injuries, fewer numbers of malpractices being filed, and significantly reduced administrative and legal defense costs for providers, insurers, and hospitals where such policies are in place.”

Apparently, the ability for us to significantly limit litigation in crisis situations is at hand if we remember what victims need and the powerful closure value of apology. Managing the victim dimension creates time and conserves resources to deal with whatever the remaining aspects of your crisis happen to be. And, when it comes to litigation, only three of every 100 civil cases will ever get to trial. If you pursue a litigation strategy and you actually get to court, odds are you’ll be hearing the old classic, “Who’s sorry now?”, being sung by the victims – about you.

The victimized have enormous power in our society. The lesson is – chill out. Have a heart. Listen to your guts. When there are victims, set aside your inherently adversarial training and nature, and then, pragmatically and humanely, manage the victim dimension. It’s how your mom taught you to behave, anyway. And that isn’t mush.

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## MANAGING THE VICTIM DIMENSION

### Victims Are:

- People
- Animals
- Living systems

### Victimization Is:

- Self-designating
- Self-maintaining
- Self-terminating

### Causes of Victimization:

- Abuse
- Arrogance
- Assault
- Bullying
- Callousness
- Carelessness
- Commission
- Confrontation
- Contention
- Deception
- Discrediting
- Dismissiveness
- Disparagement
- Embarrassment
- Fear
- Lies
- Negligence
- Omission
- Sarcasm
- Shame
- Surprise

### Victims Feel:

- Anger
  - Betrayal, disbelief, dread, excitability, and anxiety
- Frustration
  - Powerlessness, helplessness, fearfulness
- Inadequacy
  - Walking but wounded, agonized, lonely, poor judgment
- Betrayal
  - Trust no one, no one to trust, irritable, anxious

### Victim Reaction:

- Friendly gestures: Interpreted as threats
- Personal interest: Perceived as intrusions and betrayal
- Well meant advice: Perceived as insulting or controlling

### Victims Suffer:

- Intellectual deafness
- 24/7 internal and external monologue
- Everything is a question

**Victims Need:**

- Validation
  - Preferably by the perpetrator
- Visibility
  - To describe their pain and warn others
- Vindication
  - Resolution that prevents the victimization of others
- Apology
  - Verbal or written admission of responsibility, the promise of amends

**Victim Management Imperatives:**

- Control your own sense of outrage and betrayal
- Keep the real victim's circumstances in perspective
- Recognize the utter loneliness of victims, much of which they end up having to resolve themselves, by themselves, in their own time



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## **MOVING OUT OF THE TARGET ZONE: WHAT TO DO WHEN THE ACTIVISTS ATTACK<sup>©</sup>**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

A renewed wave of anti-corporate activism – such as the demonstrations and riots that occurred at the World Trade Organization (WTO) meeting in Seattle, Washington, U.S.A. in December of 1999 – is underway. Targets are the apparel industry, major brands, global businesses, institutions that appear to disenfranchise people, and other areas of consumer manufacturing where the brand, usually American, uses off-shore (that is, third world or lesser-developed) countries for sourcing. This is a reputation issue of the highest order. For some, the issue may even be one of brand survival.

### **MOVING OUT OF THE BULL'S EYE**

How do you move out of the bull's eye when activists attack? Here are 12 key facts with useful commentary and lessons to guide you.

#### **1. Activist Organizations:**

- Often labor connected, but not always.
- Invariably networked with an array of non-government organizations (NGOs) created for the purpose of advocating, organizing, or attacking on behalf of some cause, country, or issue.
- Frequently religiously connected, even church affiliated.

- A fervor and dedication to these situations that seems almost unreasonable due to an extraordinarily high level of zealotry.

**Lesson:** Understand the power of activism and the activist mentality. Prepare to negotiate.

## 2. **Characteristic Patterns of Activist Action:**

- Attack the most well known brands, companies, or celebrities.
- Generate video of chain link fences topped with barbed wire and soldiers or "thugs" carrying automatic weapons.
- Use "testimony" from real workers who are "victims."
- Take one or two very young "victims," preferably female in their very early teens, tour them around the United States and other countries, and encourage them to make allegations against the target.
- Organize and recruit supporters through religious groups and labor unions to stage demonstrations and attention-getting events (but not boycotts).
- Humiliate the brand, company, or celebrity, then demand the target never leave the countries involved but instead take a much larger role in those societies.

**Lesson:** Anti-corporate actions can be anticipated both through aggressive enforcement of standards of conduct and compliance review and by paying attention to the perceptions created by appearances. Be prepared to aggressively pre-empt these characteristic patterns of action. One way is to look at manufacturing facilities through the "eyes" of the TV camera, then prepare your own video, factory-by-factory.

## 3. **Tactical Goals:**

- Alarm consumers. (Get supporters to avoid the brand, but to ask questions.)
- Interpret situations. (Build fear or hate through slanted, emotionalized examples.)
- Intervene in the business. (Get control of the brand through demands and accusations.)
- Publicize allegations. (Virtually always taken uncritically by the media. Reporters feel good about helping with a "cause".)
- Speculate on motives. (Humiliate individuals within the target organization by emphasizing greed and insensitivity and questioning morals and ethics.)
- Allege terrible situations. (Death threats, harm, or harassment and discrimination against pregnant workers.)

**Lesson:** These tactical goals mirror what today's journalists view as their daily mission: saving at least a part of the world from something bad (you) every day. These approaches are powerful and will have impact. It's virtually impossible to change these goals. Therefore, they must be anticipated, accommodated, and addressed.

#### 4. **The Most Common Allegations:**

- Child labor.
- Discrimination, especially against pregnant and younger women.
- Extraordinary forced over-time work.
- Forced birth control pills.
- Forced labor.
- Inappropriate medical intervention (especially with young women).
- Intimidation.
- Less than subsistence level wages.
- Psychological coercion.
- Punitive employee relations.
- Slave or indentured labor.

**Lesson:** While most codes of conduct accommodate and deal with these issues, too often there's no affirmative evidence of such abuses until after the allegations have been made and the damage to reputation done. Find ways, such as independent monitoring and effective internal enforcement, to ensure that abuses are prevented, detected, corrected, and deterred.

#### 5. **The Great Irritations:**

- Emotional communication and action replace facts and reasonableness.
- Activism overshadows systematic information and evidence.
- Exaggeration overwhelms reality.
- Grassroots tactics and manipulation are the activists' customer mobilization strategy.

**Lesson:** In this emotionally powerful environment, there's often very little in the way of concrete evidence on either side. The imperative is to respond or anticipate with a sense of control and focus. Real on-the-ground facts and information are controlling. Get some, and get there first.

#### 6. **The Good News:**

- Others are getting through this.
- There are a lot of positive surprises.
- The results will be underwhelming, but significant.

**Lesson:** The goal should be a better life for workers, stronger third world societies, better economic results, and therefore better lives for everyone while you are in-country. You may not always be in-country. These results are by definition very unnewsworthy and likely to be ignored by both the media and the activists. Happy factories are not news.

## 7. **Allies and Enemies:**

- You'll fight and win your battle largely by yourself.
- Industry buddies may be too preoccupied to help, happy that you are the target and they are not, or expect you to "hold the line."
- The media will never "take your side" and may even be inclined to report beyond activist exaggeration.

**Lesson:** If you look for allies, chances are you'll find them outside your industry or by working collaboratively with those who are accusing you and their supporters. Industry solutions to activist attack are rarely successful and often cause only more controversy. Industry allies are almost never able to say and do the right things at the right time or in the right sequence. Ironically, it's the opposition that tends to be more welcoming and helpful.

## 8. **Think Counter-intuitively:**

- Your usual practices will be interpreted as corporate stalling and stonewalling.
- Your most factual analysis and statements will be considered biased, incomplete, and tainted.
- Your immediate involvement in the resolution process will be interpreted as manipulation and cover up.
- Your attempts to control the dialogue, limit the damage, or impose a solution will be characterized as public relations tactics.
- Incremental progress will be challenged as unsatisfactory – a stalling tactic designed to save money.
- Be prepared for unexpected allegations. Act quickly.
- Learn to live with persistent, intentional misinterpretation:
  - Progress is often described as mistake repair.
  - Direct financial support or sponsorships are often interpreted as attempts to buy or bribe.
  - Individual attempts to investigate or clarify are viewed as obstructionist or cover-ups.
  - Economic arguments are interpreted as arrogant, insensitive, and anti-worker.

**Lesson:** Stay focused on the ultimate goal. Solve one or two problems at a time today because tomorrow will bring another set of issues. Leaping ahead will be difficult. Make incremental progress every day. Make certain that those who are affected, directly or indirectly, know progress is being made and what your next steps are. Avoid using the media as a forum or a messenger. The media will never get it right and often, due to reporters' lack of understanding or overt sympathy, cause serious embarrassment and misinterpretation.

## 9. **Reducing the Media's Power:**

- The more you directly interact with those whose lives, families, and future you affect, the less important what the media does or says becomes.
- Work in-country.
- Meet face-to-face.
- Talk with the opposition directly.
- Reach out to communities through the factories.
- Keep public officials informed.
- If the most directly affected individuals and organizations know what's going on directly from you, what is printed in the newspaper or in magazines, or said on radio and television will become simply irrelevant.
- The opposition knows how sloppy you are about dealing with mushy problems; get focused.
- It's always easy to challenge your credibility – thus making you defensive – rather than challenging the facts.
- Get your facts straight.
- The threat of some action to be taken against you, especially if amplified by the news media, seems more powerful than the action itself.

**Lesson:** Reducing the media's power is necessary and critical to truly helping workers. Failure to address the elements of activist action and media behavior confers credibility on the opposition and gives unnecessary additional power to the news media. The ultimate reality is that support among employees and other constituent groups is extremely fragile and difficult to maintain. Therefore, the most direct strategies and tactics are the most preferable and likely to moderate the attack and achieve real on-the-ground success.

## 10. **Ultimate Realities:**

- Timidity and hesitation cause embarrassment and defeat.
- Activist attacks have impact and predictable consequences.
- Taking public credit often makes you a target.
- Each effective attack teaches activists success lessons for their next target.
- Getting it right, on the ground, is the ultimate priority.

**Lesson:** There are no end points, no clear victories. For each victory you attempt to declare, another set of allegations will surface.

## 11. **Credibility-building Communication Principles:**

- "When problems occur, we'll be prepared to talk openly about them and act quickly to respond to them operationally."
- "If key constituencies should know about an issue or problem that could affect them, we'll voluntarily talk about it as quickly and as completely as we can."

- "When problems or changes occur, we'll keep those key constituencies posted on a schedule they set until the problem or changes have been thoroughly explained or resolved."
- "We'll answer any questions those constituencies may have and suggest and volunteer additional information on matters they haven't yet asked questions about."
- "We'll be cooperative with the news media, but our primary responsibility is to communicate directly and as soon as possible with those most directly affected by our actions."
- "We'll respect and seek to work with those who oppose us."

**Lesson:** Prompt, positive, specific, responsive action is the most potent, controlling, and fundamentally sound communication strategy. In fact, the more you do along these lines, the less you need to communicate. Action must precede communication or the results are spin and the damage spin causes.

## 12. Break the Cycle:

### Principles:

- Principle 1: Act credibly; build trust; wage peace.
- Principle 2: Drive the process by being outcome focused (avoid the past).
- Principle 3: Be satisfied with incremental progress.
- Principle 4: Avoid forecasts; stay focused; predict underwhelming results.
- Principle 5: Respect and appreciate each constituency's concerns and beliefs.

### Action Steps:

- Step 1: Create a communications environment that will support your goals from the community's/customer's perspective.
- Step 2: Act aggressively, with a positive attitude.
- Step 3: Focus on the process of resolution.
- Step 4: Prepare to manage (endure) unintended, constantly changing consequences.
- Step 5: Look ahead. What killer issues are on the horizon? Get ready.

**Lesson:** Take positive, aggressive action. Move quickly. Use common sense. Be inclusive rather than exclusive. Recognize that the language, beliefs, and thought processes of the opposition, while totally different from yours, are reconcilable. Remember that you'll be held to a standard of behavior and human rights performance as though all your operations were inside a single building just outside Kansas City, Missouri City.

## CONCLUSION

Anti-corporate activist action will continue to escalate. The bigger the brand or operation, or more global the enterprise, the better a potential target it becomes. Moving out of the target zone is becoming increasingly more challenging. That's because:

- Activist campaigns are becoming more sophisticated than corporate response capabilities.
- Activist campaigns are becoming less focused and dependent on the “media” and more focused on creating trade barriers, creating market barriers such as boycotts, impeding access to capital through pressure on institutional investors, and directly attacking individuals and organizations who are the end users rather than consumers.
- Activist campaigns are building a substantial track record of success. Target companies are recognizing that direct action against them is powerful and can be successful (largely because they respond too late).

Getting and staying out of the target zone essentially means the following:

- Commit to principled, open behaviors that address issues promptly, directly, and positively.
- Get to the high ground fast. Avoid the usual denials, victim confusion, and antagonistic behaviors along the way. Get there.
- Put yourself in the activist's shoes as well as the shoes of other major stakeholders. Act from their perspective. Ultimately, these will be the only actions that will be acceptable. Start doing it today.
- Focus on clear, useful, positive goals that can be “given away” to others for the credit. You get to survive, but not to beat your chest.
- Be cautious in building phony coalitions on issues that matter. Every member works his or her own agenda. It's pointless. The only organization capable of managing its own destiny is the one that is the focus of the attack.
- Recognize that response to activism basically feels defensive and protective. The goal may simply be preservation of market share, reputation, customer base, or constituent relationships. Be satisfied with a useful, positive result in which everyone gains something. This is, in fact, how the public defines victory in confrontational settings.

## USE THE WEB (PACIFIC TOMATO EXAMPLE)

<http://workersafety.sunripeproduce.com/>

**Pacific Tomato Growers**

WORKER HEALTH & SAFETY WEBSITE  
[workersafety.sunripeproduce.com](http://workersafety.sunripeproduce.com)

HOME WHO WE ARE DOCUMENTS LITIGATION DISCUSSION CONTACT US

### HOME

Welcome to the Pacific Tomato Growers, Ltd. Worker Health and Safety website.

Pacific Tomato Growers (PTG) is a company of families committed to families. The founding families of PTG have been farmers for more than 90 years, growing fresh produce in Florida, Georgia, Virginia and California.

Each new generation has continued the commitment of the founders to:

- ✓ Provide safe and productive work which attracts many second and third generation employees to return to our farms for the quality of our work environment.
- ✓ Contribute to the improvement of the communities in which we farm. Our employees' families live, work and play in the communities where our farms are located, and we contribute to the quality of life in those communities.
- ✓ Grow, harvest, pack and sell safe, healthy and good tasting produce to customers. Our customers are industry leaders and demand top products and farming practices from us.
- ✓ Use best management practices for farming that have been developed by leading agriculture universities and government agencies.
- ✓ Structure our farming plans and programs to be compatible with and complementary to the environment, local habitat and wildlife.
- ✓ Continuously reduce or minimize the use of chemicals and substitute advanced farming and employee safety practices.

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## **DISCUSSION OUTLINE**

### **Communicating Tough, Touchy, Sensitive Situations, Dealing With High-Level Emotional Issues**

*IABC Web Seminar  
Wednesday, November 18, 2009*

If those who listened to this program with you would like to have a follow-up discussion, here are some questions to begin the conversation:

1. What do you know now that you didn't know when the program began?
2. What's the most important concept or idea you learned from this program?
3. What question has the presentation raised for which you need to find answers?
4. What key skills, ideas, or knowledges did this program confirm for you?
5. Based on what you learned and heard today, what is the first thing you're going to do when you return to your office?
6. What's the second thing you're going to do?

## **JAMES E. LUKASZEWSKI, ABC, APR, FELLOW PRSA**

James E. Lukaszewski (loo-ka-SHEV-skee) advises, coaches, and counsels the men and women who run very large corporations and organizations through extraordinary problems and critical high-profile circumstances. The bulk of his practice is in the Western Hemisphere, although he has clients from many parts of the world.

He is an expert in managing and reducing contention, counteracting tough, touchy, sensitive corporate communications issues. He counsels companies facing serious internal and external problems involving: activist counteraction; community conflict and grassroots campaigns; corporate relations failures; reputational threats; employee relationship building; ethics/integrity/compliance; litigation visibility; Web-based attacks; and threats to corporate survival. His broad-based experience ranges from media-initiated investigations to product recalls and plant closings, from criminal litigation to takeovers. He is frequently retained by senior management to directly intervene and manage the resolution of corporate problems and bad news. The situations he helps resolve often involve conflict, controversy, community action, or activist opposition. Almost half of his practice involves civil and criminal litigation.

He is a teacher, thinker, coach, and trusted advisor with the unique ability to help executives look at problems from a variety of sensible, constructive, principled perspectives. He teaches clients how to take appropriate, highly focused, ethically appropriate action. He has personally counseled, coached, and guided thousands of executives in organizations large and small from many cultures representing government; the military and defense industry; the agriculture, banking, computer, financial, food processing, health care, insurance, paper, real estate development, and telecommunications industries; cooperatives; trade and professional associations; and non-profit agencies. He is a coach to many CEOs.

Jim helps prepare spokespersons for crucial public appearances, local and network news interviews including *20-20*, *60 Minutes*, *Dateline NBC*, and *Nightline*, and for financial analyst meetings, and legislative and congressional testimony. He also provides personal coaching for executives in trouble, or facing career-defining problems and succession issues.

He is a prolific author (six books, hundreds of articles), lecturer (corporate, college and university), trainer, counselor, and public speaker. He is a member of *Public Relations Review's* Board of Professionals, a contributing editor for *Public Relations Quarterly*, member of InfoCom's *Media Relations Insider* editorial advisory board, frequent columnist and member of *PR News's* editorial board, columnist for *O'Dwyer's PR Services Report*, and columnist for PRSA's magazine, *The Strategist*. His 1992 book, *Influencing Public Attitudes: Strategies that Reduce the Media's Power*, remains a classic work in the field of direct communication. In 2005, the Public Relations Society of America published the final volume of his four-volume *Executive Action<sup>®</sup> Crisis Communication Management System: War Stories and Crisis Communication Strategies, An Anthology; Crisis Communication Planning Strategies, A Workbook; Crisis Communication Plan Components and Models: Crisis Communication Management Readiness; and Media Relations During Emergencies, A Guide*. His newest book, *Why Should the Boss Listen to You?*, was published by Jossey-Bass in 2008. He has published 25 monographs on critical communication subjects since 1994 and hundreds of articles throughout his career.

He is an internationally recognized speaker on crisis management, ethics, media relations, public affairs, and reputation preservation and restoration. Over the past 36 months he has addressed conferences of the U.S. Air Force Public Affairs Officers, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, National Information Officers Association, Puerto Rico PR Association, ABERJE in São Paulo, Brazil, Health PR & Marketing Society, Media Relations Summit, the College & University PR Association, Choice Hotels Annual Convention, CCEP World Conference on Disaster Management, National Air & Waste Management Association, National School Public Relations Association, Society for Human Resource Management, and Syracuse University; as well as the 2007, 2008, and 2009 International Conferences of IABC, the Public Relations Society of America, and ASIS International. He has addressed several Canadian trade and government conferences including the National Agriculture Awareness, the Government of Canada Communicators, and most recently Natural Resources Canada, Service Canada, Transport Canada, Purchasing Management Association of Canada, and the Canadian Investor Relations Institute. Visiting his Web site, [www.e911.com](http://www.e911.com), is like attending the University of Crisis Management.

An accredited member of the International Association of Business Communicators (ABC) and the Public Relations Society of America (APR), Mr. Lukaszewski is a member of the PRSA's College of Fellows (Fellow PRSA); Board of Ethics & Professional Standards; the Corporate and Public Affairs/Government Sections; and the New York City and Westchester/Fairfield Chapters. He is a member of the International Churchill Society, ASIS International, and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). He lectures annually at the U.S. Marine Corp's East Coast Commander's Media Training Symposium and was the second recipient of its Drew Middleton Award. He is the recipient of Ball State University's National Public Relations Achievement Award, Patrick Jackson Award for Distinguished Service to PRSA, *PR News* Lifetime Achievement Award, Lloyd B. Dennis Distinguished Leadership Award, and named 2007 Minnesota Metropolitan State University Alumnus of the Year and the 2007 Practitioner of the Year by the Southern New England chapter of the PRSA.

Lukaszewski received his BA in 1974 from Metropolitan State University in Minnesota. He is a former deputy commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Economic Development and assistant press secretary to former Minnesota Governor Wendell Anderson. He founded Minnesota-based Media Information Systems Corporation in 1978. Prior to founding The Lukaszewski Group Inc. in 1989 he was senior vice president and director of Executive Communication Programs for Georgeson & Company and a partner with Chester Burger Company, both in New York City. His biography is listed in several editions of Marquis *Who's Who in America*. His name was listed in *Corporate Legal Times* as one of "28 Experts to Call When All Hell Breaks Loose," and in *PR Week* as one of 22 "crunch-time counselors who should be on the speed dial in a crisis."