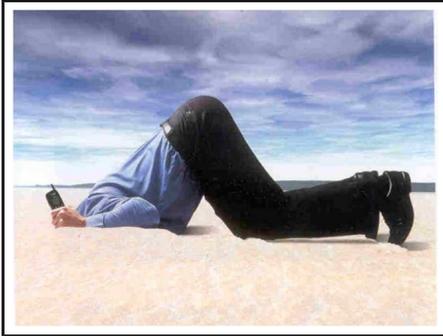


Sitting Down with Critics, Bloviators, Bellyachers and Complainers...Why?

WISDOM OF AMERICA'S CRISIS GURU SM

Q: "I was wondering whether you think it's a good idea for us to sit down with a group of people who are the equivalent of the chain-themselves-to-trees people, who have a list of demands which are in some cases reasonable and in most cases impossible."



~ Would Rather Not

I'd Rather Not...

A: Yes. In fact, you must meet with these people - or make serious attempts to do so. In every culture I've worked in, when there is contention, reasonable people ask why the contenders haven't sat down and talked. You have to try, even if the outcome is fruitless, which is as likely as not. You have to sit down if possible because your own supporters need to know that you have tried. You will be criticized by some of your supporters for doing so, for lots of really stupid reasons, but still you must make the effort.

The foundation of your success is your preparation for these face-to-face meetings. Your preparation is going to include developing key documents that you can share with others that directly comment, correct or clarify (CC&C) what others are saying, or advocating about you.

If your critics refuse to meet, send the documents to those who care about you and your goals. If your critics come to a meeting advocating things that are different than that which you expect or have experienced, prepare another CC&C document contrasting their statements and comments against what you expected or experienced. Take good notes...they do. Send out additional communications that continue to clarify, correct or comment on their postures, purposes, assertions and allegations.

Failure to take this approach is why good people lose. It takes real work and discipline to succeed. Good people lose because they are not as committed to winning as those who oppose are committed to defeating them. Actually, the negative behaviors by those who oppose benefit us because these negative behaviors and statements give us a platform for our views, ideas and rebuttal. Good people like to whine about people attacking them, but whining is neither strategic nor successful. There is nothing sillier and sadder than a whiny do-gooder.

However noble your cause, you will have to prove why, how and what you do matters and is essential, every day. Your opposition doesn't have to prove you wrong; they just have to repeatedly claim or allege something that goes unanswered to be right or just to prevail.

Why do good people and good works have to defend themselves? Because...that's just the way it is.

Why do good people doing good have to justify their actions and beliefs? Because...that's just the way it is.

Why don't good people doing good get some credit for what they do? *Why? From whom? For what?* Because... that's just the way it is.

How good do good people and their good works have to be to get some credit, or a good defense? Depends on how convincing and persuasive the good people and their support base can be on their own behalf.

Why is someone else always managing our destiny? Because we seem to be waiting for somebody else to do it for us; and they never show. The other guys are always waiting in the wings to do it for you. Manage your own destiny, or someone else will.

Doing good is hard and getting harder... In reality, every good idea needs an antagonist or adversary to prove the value of the good. Look around. No matter what the culture is, it's good vs. evil, conservatives vs. liberals, liquid soap vs. bar soap, my truth vs. another's truth, my data vs. your data.

Sitting down with your critics and naysayers time and time again is actually a crucial strategy for your success. Yes, the moment you sit down with these people, you will be criticized by many of those around you. They're going to ask, "What are you thinking?" Yet, fail to sit down and many in your own base will question and reject you faster than your opponents.

To get to agreement requires contention reduction. Why leave getting face-to-face to the end of a struggle when you could win or lose much faster? Start with face-to-face and win earlier because you answer questions and keep repeating the answers; stop whining and start winning.

If you want to be in a serious game, be prepared for serious opposition. And one more point, serious whining and suffering are individual activities about which no one but those who suffer will care. You'll suffer alone, whine alone, and lose alone.

It's up to you. Because...that's just the way it is.

By James E. Lukaszewski

America's Crisis Guru sm

James E. Lukaszewski, ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA is the author of *Lukaszewski on Crisis Communication, What Your CEO Needs to Know About Reputation Risk and Crisis Management*, available now at Amazon.com.

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