
Special Issue: Crisis Management Education

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Although there is a growing literature on crisis management, little has been published to teach our students about crises (for a notable exception, see Cirka & Corrigan, 2010). Crisis is sometimes defined as a low-probability high-consequence event. But the term may also be used more inclusively to refer to any unstable situation that poses grave dangers or challenges, regardless of the likelihood of its occurrence. Whereas the first conceptualization of crisis emphasizes preparedness, the latter highlights responsiveness. Accordingly, we need to educate our students both to prepare for and to respond to natural and human-made catastrophes, including those that affect a single organization and its stakeholders (e.g., a CEO's sudden death or a tainted product) and those that affect entire industries and/or geographical regions (e.g., a flood or an eco-destroying oil spill).

Students can learn to prepare for crises by becoming aware of and imaginative about the types of critical events to which organizations and their stakeholders are susceptible; acknowledging that much of what receives the misnomer of unforeseeable is, instead, merely unforeseen; and adopting a mindset that enables them to think the unthinkable—and then take reasonable steps to try to prevent its occurrence or, at least, to contain its impact. Our students need to cultivate the competencies that will allow them to anticipate and get ready for worst-case scenarios; to understand risk and take it seriously, rather than to underestimate and dismiss it; and to weigh the interests of all who would be affected by the repercussions of a crisis.

But because crises are not always predictable or preventable, students must also know how to respond to them when they do occur. Indeed, whereas one type of response could engender consequences that compound calamity, another course of action could confine the damage and a third alternative could even turn a crisis into an opportunity to improve pre-crisis conditions. Students need to be able to implement contingency plans and to communicate with, mobilize, and protect stakeholders during and after a major disruption. We must teach them that crisis situations tend to compromise people's abilities, even as we equip them to perform under extreme pressure.

This Special Issue will explore the ways in which we, as management educators, can enhance our students' proficiency in thinking about and dealing with crises. Possible research questions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- How can we translate the scholarship on crisis and disaster management into meaningful knowledge for our students?
- What lessons can we take from researchers and practitioners in emergency management, public health and administration, health psychology, exercise physiology, and other disciplines to inform our students to prepare for and respond to crises?
- How should we design a standalone course in crisis management?
- How can we incorporate crisis management into our current courses? How can we help students to understand the effect of an organization's culture on the organization's response to a crisis, as well as the effect of a crisis on organizational culture? How can we teach students to balance the interests of various stakeholders groups when preparing for and responding to a crisis? How can we help them develop and strengthen the skills they need to anticipate, respond to, and learn from crises?
- What teaching techniques can improve students' ability to envision, get ready for, and respond to various types of crisis situations?
- How should we teach crisis management to Millennial students—who have grown up with 9/11 and other terrorist attacks; school massacres; epidemics and pandemics; life-obliterating hurricanes, tsunamis, and earthquakes; and the financial meltdown?
- How can we educators learn from the crisis management literature to prevent and respond to crises in our classrooms?

The deadline for submission of papers is October 1, 2011. Submissions should be original, not published in any other source, and no more than 25 pages long, including references, figures, tables, appendices, etc. Information on manuscript formatting and submission can be found at <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsProdManSub.nav?prodId=Journal200931>. Submit electronic submissions, Word or RTF files only, to <http://services.bepress.com/cgi/submit.cgi?context=jme>. Under submission type, select Special Issue: Crisis. Prospective authors as well as potential reviewers are encouraged to contact the guest editor.

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Reference

- Cirka, C.C., & Corrigan, E.A. (2010). Expanding possibilities through metaphor: Breaking biases to improve crisis management. *Journal of Management Education*, 34 (2), 303-323.