

Crisis Response Presentations

2019-08-07

Course(s) Used:

- Public Speaking

Goals and Objectives:

- Students can identify the principles of a good crisis response presentation.
- Students understand common mistakes made in crisis response presentations.
- Students experience producing a crisis response presentation.

Rationale: The speed of information has increased dramatically in our interconnected world. Social media, blogging, and other forms of communication technology mean that crises appear and build momentum more quickly than ever. Basic exposure to crisis response presentations is essential because members of organizations never know when they may need to be part of responding to a crisis.

Materials Needed

Materials:

- 5 printed “disaster memos” or sets of instructions (B Horror Movies work well)
1. *Chopping Mall* IMDb Page
 2. *Iron Sky* IMDb Page
 3. *Killer Klowns from Outer Space* IMDb Page
 4. *The Stuff* IMDb Page
 5. *Piranha Part Two: The Spawning* IMDb Page

Technology:

- Classroom computer and projector

Outline of the Lesson

1. Review of previous session’s content
2. Lesson opening
3. Open classroom discussion about current crises
4. Principles of Crisis Presentations

1. **Know Your Place** (what can you say? where should you direct?)
2. **Timely Response** (maintain control of the narrative)
3. **Accurate Information**
4. **Action Focused** (talking doesn't solve problems alone)
5. **Consider Multiple Audiences**
 1. Other Members
 2. Investors
 3. Clients
 4. Regulators / Law Enforcement
 5. General Public
5. Common Errors in Crisis Communication
 1. "No Comment"
 2. Speaking "Off the Record" (no legal requirement for confidence)
 3. Speculation
 4. Not being honest and responsive
 5. Being too proactive
 6. Accidentally admitting guilt
6. Hands-on group work ^{1 2}
 1. Group students into 5 groups of 3-4 students
 2. Each group selects or is assigned a disaster envelope
 3. Groups have 30 minutes to research their topic and prepare a 2 minute presentation
 1. This presentation must use a presentation aid similar in style to a PowerPoint presentation
 2. Each member in the group must participate in the presentation
 3. Students are encouraged to leave the classroom to collaborate during this portion of the assignment
 4. Each group delivers its presentation, which is followed by a brief Question and Answer session.
 5. Debrief the activity
7. Lesson closing

¹ Pruim, D. E. (2016). Disaster Day! Integrating speech skills through impromptu group research and presentation. *Communication Teacher*, 30(2), 62-66. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17404622.2016.1139148>

² Pruim, D. E. (2016). Instructor's corner: Disaster Day! An impromptu group speech activity. *Communication Currents*, 11(3). Retrieved from <https://www.natcom.org/CommCurrentsArticle.aspx?id=>

Limitations

This lesson requires student access to online resources and personal computers. Strategic grouping may be necessary for improved peer mentoring.

Variations and Accommodations

Follow guidance from local accommodation authorities. Students for whom technology usage will present an unreasonable burden may be accommodated on an individual basis. Students may be placed in groups strategically if needed.