



REPUTATION AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT

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Reputation

RESPECTED REPUTATION:

- **Ensures a respected brand or trade mark**
- **Something which all schools dream about**

Why?

Sound reputation is an indication of an institution's:

- Integrity
 - Quality
 - Trustworthiness
 - Sustainability
 - Reliability
-
- **Not for sale!!!**

Fact!

- **Bad things also happen to good people!**
- **Bad things also happen to good institutions!**
 - **Also to great schools!!**

Be crisis ready!

Examples:

- Schweizer-Reneke
- San Souci
- Grey College
- KES
- Driehoek
- Ens



Caused by:

- **Individuals**
- **Poor decisions**
- **Negligence**
- **Stupidity**
- **Nature**
- **Just happens: unforeseen
: unplanned**

A bad or negative event

- **Part of life**
- **Not necessarily a crisis**
- **Does not have to harm your reputation**

All depends on

- **how the institution reacts and deals with the event !!!!**

Reputation matters....

- **Good news: it can be managed!**

**Risk management→
crisis management / reputation
management**

Risk management

- **Comes first**
- **Continuous process**
- **Efforts to prevent crisis**

Risk management

Proper risk management will

- lesser the risk of a crisis
- guide you in an event of a crisis

Contingency planning

- **Essential part of risk management**
- **Responsibility of all**
- **Identify potential risks**
- **Identify possibility**
- **Visualise the impact**
- **How will it be managed?**
- **Requires the relevant policies / planning / strategies**
- **Do all you can to prevent a crisis!!**
- **Be crisis ready!**

A crisis

- **A crisis: develops over time**
 - : happens in a moment**
 - : normally affects people**
 - : requires proper crisis management**
- **Communication on its own is not enough**
- **Communication is worth nothing if it happens in a vacuum**
= decisions / actions / leadership must follow

Crisis management

- **Process by which the school deals with an unexpected event**
- **Will differ from incident to incident**
- **Schweizer-Reneke vs Driehoek**

In an event of a crisis:

Step 1:

Get, as quickly as possible, all relevant people together

: from various perspectives

- analyse the scope**
- determine the impact**
- also on the reputation**

Reputation

- **Built over time**
 - **Result of hard work**
 - **Must be maintained**
 - **Where necessary:**
 - be “repaired”
 - be “strengthened”
- requires reputation management!**

Reputation management is all about:

- “ Managing your reputation by monitoring and influencing it”
 - Mostly by addressing negative events/ issues / perceptions / reviews / etc.
- Boils down to communication

Bad events require effective reputation management

Includes:

- **Dealing with the media**
- **Protecting the staff**
- **Dealing with the learners and the parents**
- **Protecting the brand**
- **Managing social media**

Basic rules:

- **Do not justify something that is wrong**
- **Be 100% honest (always just the truth)**
- **Be pro-active**
- **Always be ethical**
- **Know what you can control - and control that!**
- **Manage perceptions positively**
- **Do not ignore negative news / perceptions**

During a school crisis:

- **Managing the media is critical**
- **Media → influences perceptions**
- **Life often about perceptions and not facts**

Media survival kit

- **Mindset**
 - **you are the expert**
 - **opportunity to reach the public**
 - **opportunity to shape your reputation**

Media survival kit....

Essentials :

- react quickly;
- know the facts;
- straight and plain language;
- stick to your field of responsibility;
- be courteous and professional;
- written response;
- offers to review an article;
- only correct facts;
- apology is in order;
- one spokesperson

Media survival kit....

Essentials :

- build a relationship;
- keep your promises;
- media statements : recommended

Don'ts

- **Speculate**
- **Attack the media**
- **“off the record comments”**
- **Threaten**
- **Arrogance**

Protect your staff:

- **Effective reputation management ensures staff trust**
 - let them feel secure;
 - keep them informed;
 - keep them away from the media;
 - provide all possible emotional support;
 - no sensation;
 - be honest;
 - manage them as co-owners;
 - communicate what is needed / nothing less or more;
 - guide them in what to communicate

Learners / Parents / Community

- **They have a direct interest;**
- **Let them experience school leadership is in control;**
- **Be patient;**
- **Provide all possible support;**
- **Communicate!**

Protecting the brand

- **Identify possible reputation risks;**
- **Be calm / do not overact;**
- **Do not justify something that is wrong;**
- **Take responsibility for the crisis;**
- **Communicate the school's policy clearly;**
- **Eg.: a potential reputation damaging incident**
 - **acknowledge the incident**
 - **state the school's policy**
 - **promise to investigate properly**
 - **commit to deal with it responsibly and in terms of the school's policy**

Social media

- **Social media or not?**
- **Just ask:**
 - **how do we reach our clients?**
 - **how do we reach our potential clients?**

Social media in context

- **Not a goal in itself**
- **Just another communication channel**

Social media in practice

- **Interactive communication**
- **Requires designated media person**
 - able
 - judgement
 - support
- **Full time responsibility**
- **Enormous potential (if utilised effectively)**

Conclusion

- **We all need reputation management somewhere!**
- **Be prepared: do decent risk management**
 - policies / planning / strategies
- **Bad event → always the potential of a crisis**
- **Crisis → always the potential of an opportunity**
- **Wellbeing of people always comes first**
- **Any crisis: affects the institution in some or other way**
- **Through effective reputation management negative outcomes can be minimized**
- **Requires unemotional action / clinical / professional / correct**
- **But with empathy / caring heart / and not without emotion!**

Conclusion

- **Unconditional apology at the right time – communication skill**
- **Effective communication: “tell it all and tell it fast”**
- **Public appreciate honesty and transparency**
- **“Remorse” says more than “sorry”**

Conclusion

- **Crisis: requires:**
 - **cool and calm heads**
 - **“sometimes you win sometimes you learn”**
 - **learn the lessons others have learned!**

Thank you