

Public Relations

Part 3

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Reputation Management

- **Reputation**¹⁴
 - It is defined as the collective representation of an organization's past performance that describes the firm's ability to deliver valued outcomes to multiple stakeholders.
 - It is said that reputation, unlike corporate image, is owned by the public

Reputation Management

- Reputation is not formed by what you say but by what you do and have done in the past
- Any amount of slogan or packaging cannot make a good reputation
- A good reputation is created by good work
 - It can be destroyed by bad work
 - This pertains to how it manages its employees, manages issues and crisis and delivers its services, ethical actions and transparent behaviour

Reputation Management

- There are three foundations of reputation
 1. Economic performance
 2. Social responsiveness
 3. The ability to deliver valuable outcomes to stakeholders
- Public relations has a role to play in all these three foundations
- Effective Crisis management is important to enhance the later two foundations

Reputation Management

- Social responsiveness can be enhanced by issue tracking and effective positioning of the organisation
- Positioning is done by projecting a desirable image of the organisation, such as:
 - “We are a sensitive and caring healthcare organisation”
 - “We care for your safety and deliver excellence in care”
 - We are a quality conscious organisation”
- These are basically brand promises which the organisation must live up to.
- These aspects can be enhanced by effective and persuasive risk communication

Reputation Management

- For an organisation, their reputation index needs to be tracked
- This can be done by *Reputation Audit*
- Reputation audit is a process of analysing exactly at what place the organisation brand occupies in the web.
- Some tools are available for searching the web and analysing the result

Reputation Management

- The present climate in which a healthcare organisation needs to manage its reputation is challenging
- The challenges are due to:
 - Declining trust
 - A survey by FICCI in 2019 showed that 61% patients in India do not believe that hospitals act in their best interest ¹⁵
 - Low risk tolerance

Reputation Management

- Regulatory environment
- High stakeholders' expectation
- Social media accessibility and fast reach to its audience
- E-patients: patients come to a doctor after surfing goggle and starts doubting the expertise of a physician when the physician's advise does not exactly match with their Google knowledge

Reputation Management

- A reputation framework
 - What you say – intent
 - What you do – action
 - Customer service experience
 - What you are seen to do
 - Peer perspectives

Reputation Management

- **Good reputation can bring hard commercial benefits:**
 - it helps to build strong brands,
 - launch new products,
 - secure licensing deals,
 - recruit the best staff and avoid intrusive regulation.
- **Issues or incidents that damage reputation can undermine these benefits**

Crisis Management

- Most often crisis management is associated with incidents
- Usually these incidents happen suddenly
- This puts the organisation in an operational and communication challenges
- The situation needs a very swift decision making and action
- These incidents are usually very explosive in nature
- These cause an immense pressure in a very short time frame and the organisation comes under spotlight with adverse exposure in the media

Crisis Management

- Some examples of these explosive incidents are:
 - Fire incident
 - Unexpected death of a patient during a procedure which are usually considered as safe
 - Mass resignation of employees
 - Outbreak of an infectious disease in a hospital
 - Serial deaths of patients following caesarean sections

Crisis Management

- Crisis

- A crisis is defined as: an inherently abnormal, unstable, complex situation that represents a threat to the strategic objectives, reputation or existence of an organisation¹⁶

- Issues

- The concept about what an issue is varies
 - Some organisation considers an issue as “just what we have to deal with everyday”

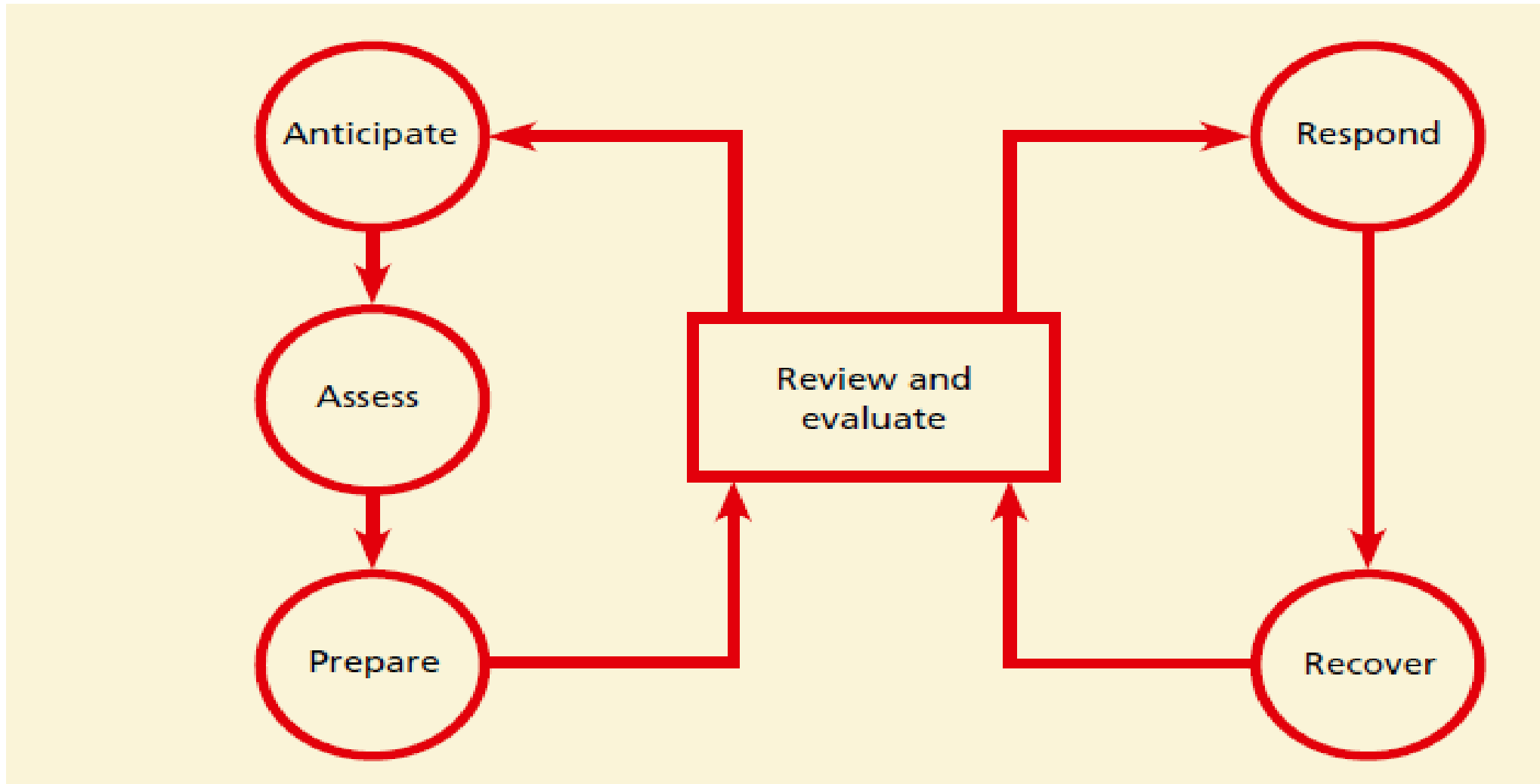
Crisis Management

- Other organisations considers an issue as a problem or challenge that requires an strategic management
- Some organisations see it as an opportunity which is either a risk or a controversial element
- An issue can also be of the nature of political or social issue that needs a industry wide response
- Crisis management requires an immediate response to an incident
- Issue management is more leisurely and is longer-term response to a smouldering risk

Crisis Management

- Crisis management has developed from:
 - Incident management
 - Emergency response, and
 - Business continuity
- Crisis management is, by and large, an operational management responsibility
 - Issue management pertains more to corporate affairs and communication departments

CRISIS MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK



Source: PAS 200 2011: Cabinet Office, UK

Crisis Management

- **Capability development**

- This will need strategic commitment, resources and creation of a crisis management structure and process
- The capability should be such that it should be able to deliver all the elements depicted in the crisis management framework diagram
- For reviewing and evaluating, an organisation need not wait till a crisis happens

Crisis Management

- The organisation can learn from other management reviews, periodic checks, incident reports, near misses and lessons from incidences in other organisations
- Crisis management capability has intellectual, organisational, cultural and logistic requirements:
 - Intellectual requirement includes; analytical ability, strategy setting, choosing options, making decisions and evaluating their impact

Crisis Management

- Organisational requirement includes structures and processes
- Cultural requirement includes staff supporting top management decisions and policy
- Logistic requirements include supporting with right resources in the right place at the right time

Crisis Management

- **Crisis Management Plan**

- Crisis management needs flexible capabilities and not detailed pre-prepared response procedures
- It should be relatively brief
- There is no template to adopt for the plan

- **The Key Elements of the Plan**

- Designating a person with known capabilities who can initiate the plan

Crisis Management

- Provide all necessary details and information that may be in the form of an aides memoirs
- Determine what are the initial actions to be taken
- Describe the activities of all the supporting departments that would provide the required information as fast as possible
- Integrate crisis management response with BCM activities
 - BCM activities include the pre-planned activities for continuity of the business of the organaisation during and after a crisis situation

Crisis Management

- **Communicating in a crisis**
 - In a crisis, communication is critically important
 - A well developed crisis communication strategy should include:
 - Most importantly, it should be for media and other stakeholders
 - Should make provision for internal communication
 - Communication should be fast, transparent, clear, sincere, honest, accurate and understandable by all without any jargon

Ethics in Public Relations

- To understand ethics one must revisit the basics of philosophical and moral perspectives on which ethics are based
- These moral and philosophical perspectives are:
 - Right and Wrong
 - When someone does a wrong, he/she is punished somehow or other for doing it
 - It may be law, may be by castigation by fellow beings or even by pangs of own conscience

Ethics in Public Relations

- Virtue and Vice

- The quality of morality or what is right
- Vice is the opposite of virtue

- Benefit and Harm

- Benefit is doing some good or providing some material or financial gain
- Harm is physical or mental damage

- Universal Rules of Conduct

- These are enshrined in the ethical principles of autonomy, benevolence, non-maleficence, and justice

Ethics in Public Relations

- Character
 - This is intimately associated with ethics
 - Character is based on traits, qualities and reputation and on moral values
- Ethics involves to determine a question to answer how moral or good or bad the action would be
- Ethics can be divided into three areas:

Ethics in Public Relations

- Normative ethics
 - Is your thinking right?
- Descriptive ethics
 - How should you act?
- Meta-ethics
 - What does it mean to be right?
 - Whether it has an objective justification

Ethics in Public Relations

- **Code of Ethics.**

- The Public Relations Society of India (PRSI) adopted a code of ethics in its First All India Public Relations Conference, held in Delhi, in 1968. ¹⁷
- This Code was earlier adopted, in 1965, by the International Public Relations Associations (IPRA) at Athens, Greece.
- Thus, this code of ethics is known as the “Code of Athens” among the world community of Public Relations.
- The Code is largely based on the United Nations Charter on Human Rights.

Ethics in Public Relations

- The code has the following clauses:
 - Endeavour
 - To contribute to achievement of full stature of moral and cultural status of human beings
 - To establish communication patterns that fosters each member to be fully informed
 - To conduct themselves always and in all circumstances in a manner to instil confidence among contacts
 - To remember that PR practitioners behaviour even in private should always be beyond reproach

Ethics in Public Relations

- Undertake

- To observe the moral principles and rules of the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”
- To pay due regard to, and uphold human dignity
- To establish the moral, psychological and intellectual conditions for dialogue and recognise others rights to express their views
- To uphold the interests of those people and organisations whom they represent and that of the public
- To communicate avoiding misunderstanding and show loyalty and integrity to the client and employer and maintain accuracy and privacy when using digital media

Ethics in Public Relations

- Refrain from
 - Subordinating truth to other requirements
 - Circulating unsubstantiated facts
 - Taking part in any venture or undertaking which is unethical, or dishonest or can impair human dignity or integrity
 - Using any manipulative methods or techniques designed to create subconscious motivation over which an individual has no control

Ethics in Public Relations

- Sanctions
 - IPRA members (read PRSA members) shall agree to abide by and help enforce the disciplinary procedures of the IPRA in regard to breaching of this code
- PR Ethics and the media
 - PR professionals are intimately associated with media.
 - It is a reciprocal relationship

Ethics in Public Relations

- PR uses media in many ways, such as
 - It sends media releases
 - Send to media stories of the organisation
 - PR conducts press meet
 - Arrange interviews, etc
- Such intimate interaction with media needs consideration of ethics

Ethics in Public Relations

- **Some aspects of media and PR relationships¹⁸**
 - Journalists consider the PR practitioners as manipulators of truth
 - Two prominent issues in the relationship are honesty in PR communication and access to media and access by media
 - Both these are problematic issues in using media as a conduit for information
 - In all PR training honesty is emphasised as the cornerstone of media relationship policy

Ethics in Public Relations

- Sometimes the PR professionals are often termed as “Spin Doctor” by very staunch critics
 - This is, of course, far from truth
- It may be realised that sometimes a public relations exercise is much more subtle than an outright lie
- An example:
 - A PR agency issued faxes to local media that there ‘might likely’ be a major news conference at 9-30 am next day at a ‘place to be determined’
 - It further said that later on the day further information will be available
 - This is an old PR strategy that did not cross the ethical boundary

Ethics in Public Relations

- On examination it is clear that it is fake.
 - The wording 'might likely' is never used when calling a press meet
 - The wording is such that there might or as well might not be any press meet
- Media access and ethics
 - Media believes that they have an inalienable right to access to information and sources
 - Often the needs of the organisation conflict with these 'rights'

Ethics in Public Relations

- More problematic for PR professional is gaining access to media
 - It is well recognised that bribing to gain access is totally unethical and unacceptable but it is practised widely and subtly
 - What constitutes a bribe is difficult to determine
 - There is no guidelines about what size of a 'gift' constitutes a bribe or even if invitation to a party constitutes a bribe
- However there is always a need not only to behave in an ethical way but also must be perceived to be so

Ethics in Public Relations

- The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information technology in its 47th report made certain observations on “Paid News”¹⁹
 - That there is a rise in paid news
 - The reasons identified were:
 - Corporatisation of media
 - Desegregation of ownership and editorial role
 - Decline in autonomy of editors/journalists due to emergence of contract system
 - Poor wage levels of journalist

Ethics in Public Relations

- The code for journalists also laid down:
 - Honesty and accuracy in all collection and dissemination of information
 - Protection of confidentiality when necessary
 - Fairness and avoidance of bribes
- In these respects there is no difference between the PR codes and Journalists codes
- However the ground reality is different
- Mr Siddharth Varadarajan while delivering the Reuters Memorial Lecture at the Oxford University has brought out the ills that the media is suffering from²⁰

Ethics in Public Relations

- **Media Transparency**

- Transparency means one can see what lies beneath
- Sometimes when searching for what lies beneath, one follows the money¹⁸ (*supra*)
- This money trail involves issues of ownership, influence and control
- It also involves responsible reporting by which media consumers decide on their own
- It follows that indeed there is a problem in media transparency
- Social media has given a new dimension in media relationship

Evaluation in Public Relations

- **Definition**

- Many authors have defined evaluation in many different ways
- Many has emphasised on effectiveness
 - These definitions relate to programme or campaign objectives
- Others maintain that the term evaluation is a broad one
 - This breadth leads to confusion

Evaluation in Public Relations

- Some authors consider evaluation as a research-based activity
 - This activity includes: programme planning, implementation and impact
- The Commission on Measurement and Evaluation of Public Relations defines evaluation research as:
 - “A form of research that determines the relative effectiveness of a public relations campaign or programme by measuring programme outcomes against a predetermined set of objectives that initially established the level or degree of change required” ²¹

Evaluation in Public Relations

- The outcomes in the definition means:
 - Changes in the levels of awareness,
 - Understanding
 - Attitudes
 - Opinions and/or
 - Behaviour
- The definition clarifies that evaluation means measuring outcomes against the predetermined objectives

Evaluation in Public Relations

- Robust objectives have certain characteristics.²²
- These are included in the acronym SMARRTT, where,
 - S = **S**pecific
 - M = **M**easurable
 - A = **A**chievable
 - R = **R**ealistic
 - R = **R**elevant
 - T = **T**argeted, and
 - T = **T**imed

Evaluation in Public relations

- Drawing up objectives
 - Begin with 'to' followed by a "strong" verb
 - Specify a single end-point
 - Be precise and specific
 - State the size of change or level to be maintained in quantifiable terms
 - Specify the expected time of achievement
 - Link to organisational objectives
 - Set objectives that relate to PR
 - Ensure targets are achievable

Evaluation in Public relations

- After the objectives have been set, the research design has to be formulated
- It should include:
 - Population for the study
 - Sampling frame
 - Sampling - Whether qualitative or quantitative
 - Types of sample – probability based or non-probability
 - Sample size – determined by statistical methods
 - Method of data collection – interview, survey, focus group, media
- Data analysis
- Conclusion
- Report writing and presentation
- Planning action for further PR campaign

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End of Lecture