Communication in Times of Crisis

Eran Ropalidis
Israel Central Bureau of Statistics

June 2019
“I fear three newspapers more than a hundred thousand bayonets”

Napoleon Bonaparte
What are we talking about?

An unusual or unplanned event

- That has the potential to have a negative impact on reputation (name / image / reliability)
- Could harm or endanger the organization’s existence
What Types?

• **Statistical issues** - estimation errors, methodological shortcomings, stakeholders challenging data

• **Corporate/ organizational issues** - conflict of interest, incompetence, unwise public statement by an employee

• **Continuity issues** - system failures like website down, cyber attacks

• **Security issues** - confidentiality breaches

• **Reputational attacks** - allegation of bias, distortion, fake news

• **Political interference** - premature disclosure of data by political actors, pressure to change or reschedule releases, and national or international political instability
What is our purpose?

• To mitigate the damage by ensuring that the organization is well prepared to respond to publicity problems in timely and appropriate manner

• Turn the crisis into an achievement, reinforce and demonstrate the commitment to integrity and transparency
Who is involved?

• Upper-level management members
• Dissemination and Communication
• Relevant departments
  o Information Technology
  o Statistical methods
  o Surveys and Censuses
  o Administration
  o Cyber Security
  o Human resources
## How to deal with it?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before event</th>
<th>During event</th>
<th>After event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advance planning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Executing the plan</strong></td>
<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review lessons learned from prior experiences</td>
<td>Assess the situation</td>
<td>Evaluate the effectiveness of the completed communication process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify likely crises</td>
<td>Consult the crisis communications plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define the audiences</td>
<td>Confirm or tailor plan elements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan scenarios</td>
<td>Implement the strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare standby statements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct simulation exercises</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Within the ICBS

• Established CCT (crisis communication team)
• Instituting awareness and cooperation culture among employees for potential threats
• Periodic refresher training and exercises
• Monitoring traditional media and social media
• Quick gather and consult when needed
• Assess the case and choose mode of operation
• What/when/how/who
ICBS and Housing Price Data

- False indices
- Contradictory data
- Confusing data
- Erroneous data
- Distorted data
- Unreliable data
- Politically-motivated data
- Slip up work
Crisis Communication Team

Israel central bureau of statistics
Formal letter to chief editors

Israel central bureau of statistics

Tools

Talking points & standby statements
New Press Release – Housing indices
Periodic media briefings

Media interviews and sound bites
opinion articles and official responses
Social-media original content

בשנת 2018 הסתיימה בנייה של 49,970 דירותMORE THAN 40,000 NEW UNITS WERE COMPLETED IN 2018
(according to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics)

manda mikri diron

Ansh Shinyot hodshiy b-12 hazoshim ha'asurim

נתונים בתי הדירה

https://www.facebook.com/continuaiz/
Results

- better understanding of the statistical data and its meaning (amongst stakeholders)
- Strengthening the relationship with the media
- Building trust, engagement and positive responses
- Better presentation of the organization
Conclusions

• Be active and not passive
• Act fast
• Stay calm, act with:
  o transparency
  o accountability
  o accessibility
  o empathy
• KISS message (Keep It Short and Simple)
• Use coordinated and unified message among the CCT
• PAKAL (be prepared for situations in which one must act according to a predetermined pattern)

  “hard in training - easy in battle”
Thank you!