

SAMPLE CPRC ANSWERS

Sample 1 - Crisis Communication: Visit Florida

I. Immediate Action

- A. Fact-finding/Research—Quickly
 1. Circumstances of the Lake City incident
 2. Any related or similar incidents (like in Miami)
 3. Police activity, if any
 4. Content analysis of news reports domestic and foreign
- B. Visit Florida should issue a statement that Florida is safe, isolated incidents like this one notwithstanding. Back it up with statistics.
- C. Call for a high-level meeting of state officials in Tallahassee to plan State's response.
 1. Travel & Tourism leaders
 - a. Visit Florida
 - b. Theme Parks
 - c. Tour promoters
 2. Police
 - a. FHP
 - b. FDLE
 3. Governor's Office

II. Long-term Action

- A. Research
 1. Tourist-related crime
 2. Perceptions of tourist-related crime in key markets
 3. Behavior change related to such perceptions
- B. Work with FDLE/FHP on crime
 1. More security
 2. More visible security
 3. Systemic changes (unmarked rental cars, i.e.)
- C. Based on results of research: Shift budget as needed
 1. Target message of enhanced security (if that perception is real)
 2. Continue regular messages if no behavior or perception problems are identified

III. Continue to monitor and measure perceptions and behaviors until positives return

Sample 2 - Non-profits

There is a fundamental flaw in this program: The grant asks for more than the volunteers are willing to give. It might have been good to notice this before accepting the grant, but that's a moot point now. Some remedial—corrective—action is needed if the program is to succeed.

Changing the terms of a federal grant is a daunting process, but some research into the grant's background might be useful in determining some middle ground that will meet the needs of both parties involved.

Perhaps the grant sponsor didn't consider a three-year commitment's severity or the hardship it would work on the volunteers. Maybe the goals can be met via alternate routes.

Some options to be considered:

- A. Reducing the term of the mentorship to one year, with the volunteer having the option of continuing if he/she chooses.

- B. Offering an “organizational” mentorship under which an organization—business, civic club (Rotary) or church would be the “mentor” with various specific members working with the client.
- C. Partnering with a Goodwill Industries-type provider whose mission is working with disadvantaged clients.

If the grant-provider is flexible, then it can have a win/win situation on its hands. If not, then the disadvantaged are the losers.

Sample 3 - Consumer PR

This case needs LOTS of research, both operational and public relations. To start with, who is this company? Liz Claiborne, Talbot’s, Macy’s? Or Fran’s Friendly Fashions?

If it’s the former, then some action is required. If it’s the latter, then Fran just goes on about her business. She can’t effect any change in third-world nations.

I. Operational Research:

- A. How much foreign material do you use? Domestic?
- B. Where/how is this material made?
 - 1. Do you have any influence on the manufacturing process?
 - 2. Do optional suppliers exist?
 - a. At all?
 - b. At competitive prices?
 - c. Are they any “cleaner” than current suppliers?
- C. Can you validate “inhumane” treatment? Is the charge credible?
- D. Is your company part of any “human rights” pacts?
- E. What is your competition doing? Is the fashion industry taking a position?
- F. What are your retailers (your actual customers) saying/doing? Are they concerned?

II. PR Research

- A. How is your label shown in TV?
 - 1. Raw materials?
 - 2. Finished goods?
 - 3. In a retail setting?
- B. Are consumers aware of the controversy?
- C. Is buying behavior being influenced?
 - 1. People still buy your label?
 - 2. People buying competing labels?
 - 3. People stopped buying fashion sportswear at all?

III. PR Strategy (assuming some merit to charges)

- A. Be a leader in creating change in the industry
- B. Organize an industry-wide approach
 - 1. Problem not unique to your brand
 - 2. Industry has better chance of causing change than individual brand
 - 3. “Spreads” the blame
- C. Play up domestic business—design & manufacturing
 - 1. Jobs and payroll important to local economy
 - 2. Most competitors manufacture off shore (Nike, i.e.)

IV. Media Strategy

- A. Establish Primary Public (those people who can do—or not do—what you need done)
 - 1. What behavior(s) do you need?

2. Who can deliver this behavior?
 - a. Industry critics Shut up and go away
 - b. Retail trade Keep buying your brands
 - c. Ultimate Consumers Keep buying your brands
 - d. Mass Media Intervening Public to masses
- B. Mass Media are “last” priority
 1. Critics, retailers and consumers can be reached directly
 2. Media filters and gate keeping are not going to help

V. Getting the message out:

- A. Critics: one-on-one, once industry response has been determined
- B. Retailers: same
- C. Consumers: one-on-one, indirect via email, letters, store stuffers, retailer mailings, etc.
- D. Media:
 1. Trade pubs: (Women’s Wear Daily, i.e.) one-on-one
 2. Networks: Luncheons in NYC and LA
 3. Newspapers: Editorial Board presentations

Sample 4 - Public Affairs

This dilemma is not really EPA’s fight. You didn’t decide to cut your own budget. The state did, and for really good reasons—there is no money left after funding public safety, education and welfare entitlements.

I. Thus, the EPA has its choice of two strategies:

- A. The moral (and political) high ground, which is to acknowledge the truncated budget and the priority of funding people’s immediate needs—safety, education and welfare.
- B. Graciously awaiting better times to move ahead with important environmental projects, and
- C. Securing a commitment from the legislature and governor that the EPA will be first in line, in exchange for taking one for the team on this.

II. Quietly encouraging those outraged to put pressure on the state house and governor’s office in hopes of getting what you need now. This is an “all in” strategy, and isn’t recommended.

- A. If it works, then the EPA gets its budget
- B. If it doesn’t, then EPA gets nothing and has alienated its political allies in Tallahassee and eroded relationships.
- C. EPA risks looking unconcerned for public needs—willing to sacrifice public health, welfare and education for its projects

III. Operational Research

- A. Is the budget that tight?
- B. Are there compelling reasons to fund the Everglades Project NOW?
 1. Damage to the ‘Glades is exponential
 2. The “Big Sugar” window will close
 3. Matching funds will vanish
 4. Where would EPA’s money come from? Who loses money?
 5. What will happen to the Everglades if nothing is done? How long do we have?

IV. PR Research

- A. Exactly WHO is irate?
- B. Floridians in general
 1. Special interest groups?
 - a. Audubon

- b. Sierra
- c. River of Grass League
- C. Are they irate enough to put up some of the money?
- D. If money is diverted to EPA, what programs might be cut?
 - 1. What is the impact on the public?
 - 2. What friends in the legislative process might we lose?
- E. Political Reality: Is this a done deal, or is there room for compromise?
 - 1. Will protesting make lasting enemies?
 - 2. Will being patient be rewarded?

- IV. If you select the moral high ground, stemming the cries of the wounded won't be all that hard. It will be easy to
- A. Point the finger at the legislature
 - B. Publicly yield to the "greater good" of public needs
 - C. Be a good team player and plan for better times

V. Stakeholders

In Tallahassee, the political scene elevates all senators, representatives, cabinet members and the governor's office to primary publics. This group annually decides your budget. Therefore, a communication strategy has to start with each group.

One-on-one or one to several is the best route, encouraging two-way symmetrical communication and plenty of opportunity for feedback.

After that, the environmental community needs to be addressed. If you are able to get a commitment from legislative leaders or the governor on the EPA priority, then communicating that in one-on-one and one-on-several situations will work. This is an important audience, because it is well organized, respected and votes.

The mass media are useful in cases like this because they can reach large numbers, especially since this issue has gone national.

- VI. The message is morally correct: We're doing this because (a) we have no choice, and (b) it's the best thing for Florida. If this budget is a "done deal" it's useless to swim upstream to one's demise.