

Week 2.

Crisis Communication Theories I

16 January 2017

Questions



Groups & Case Studies

- Remember to form a group of 4 students by Saturday January 21, 8pm.
- The following cases are already very popular, so I'd recommend you to choose a different one:
 - 2016 Tianjin Blast
 - 2012 KFC Crisis

What does this brand say to you?



What does this brand say to you?

The image shows the H&M logo in a vibrant red, hand-painted brushstroke style. The letters are thick and expressive, with visible texture and slight irregularities at the edges, giving it a casual and approachable feel. The logo is centered on a white background with a subtle grey gradient at the bottom.

What does this brand say to you?



Greenpeace vs. Li-Ning (and others)



ZDHC针对淘汰长链含氟化学品的声明

发布群体

媒体、消费者、非政府组织

消息

所有ZDHC成员品牌已承诺在2015年1月1日前逐步停止使用长链全氟化合物。全氟化学品 (PFCs) 广泛应用于多个行业，以提供各种消费产品的防水，防污和拒油性能。在服装和鞋类行业，这些物质可为产品提供保护，免受天气影响，保持衣服崭新外观，并增长寿命。

部分全氟化合物可以降解形成长链全氟化学物质，如全氟辛酸和全氟辛烷磺酸，这些物质已知具有持续性，生物累积性和高毒性。因此，这些物质在有害化学物质零排放 (ZDHC) 联合路线图中被确定为优先管控物质中的一类。我们是ZDHC的缔约品牌成员。

在这个阶段，更多创新是必需的，这是为了让所有ZDHC缔约品牌承诺完全淘汰含氟三防整理剂技术，特别针对高性能产品。然而，我们了解到对于完全摆脱含氟化学技术的强烈要求，因此，我们将投资于后续研究，以评估替代技术的可行性。

http://ir.lining.com/en/csr/reports/csr_zdhc_statement.pdf

Greenpeace vs. Li-Ning (and others)

Greenpeace: Nike, Esprit, Victoria's Secret and LiNing fail toxic-free fashion ranking

Press release - 5 July, 2016

Hamburg, 5 July 2016 – Greenpeace International today releases its Detox Catwalk, assessing how effectively 19 major fashion brands are cleaning up their supply chains of toxic chemicals. Inditex (which owns Zara), H&M and Benetton are the only three “Avant-Garde” companies on track to clean up their chains as promised by 2020, while Victoria’s Secret and Esprit and sports brands Nike and LiNing are failing to take the necessary steps towards that goal.

“We applaud H&M, Zara and Benetton for leading the way and setting a new standard in toxic free fashion,” said Kirsten Brodde, Head of the Detox My Fashion campaign at Greenpeace Germany. “These companies prove that cleaning up the fashion industry is possible – both for large and medium-sized companies.”

<http://www.greenpeace.org/international/en/press/releases/2016/Greenpeace-Nike-Esprit-Victorias-Secret-and-LiNing-fail-toxic-free-fashion-ranking/>

Greenpeace vs. Li-Ning (and others)



Importance of CM today

- Nowadays, **unprepared organisations** have a lot to lose from a crisis; more than before.
- Five recent changes have contributed to making crisis management more important:
 - Stakeholder activism is on the rise (more so online)
 - More media and public scrutiny of crises
 - The value of reputation has increased
 - Broader understanding of what crises might strike
 - [Negligent Failure to Plan]

Today's learning goals

1. Understand why theories are useful for crisis communication managers.
2. Be familiar with the main concepts and applicability of the following theories:
 1. Apologia
 2. Image Repair
3. Apply theories to the study of the 2008 Carrefour Boycott Crisis in China.

Theories

“A [crisis communication] theory is used to explain what **will work**, what **decisions should be made** and how, what actions are likely to result and how, and how things relate. It is a **prediction** based on what has happened before.”

(Fearn-Banks 2016, p. 17)

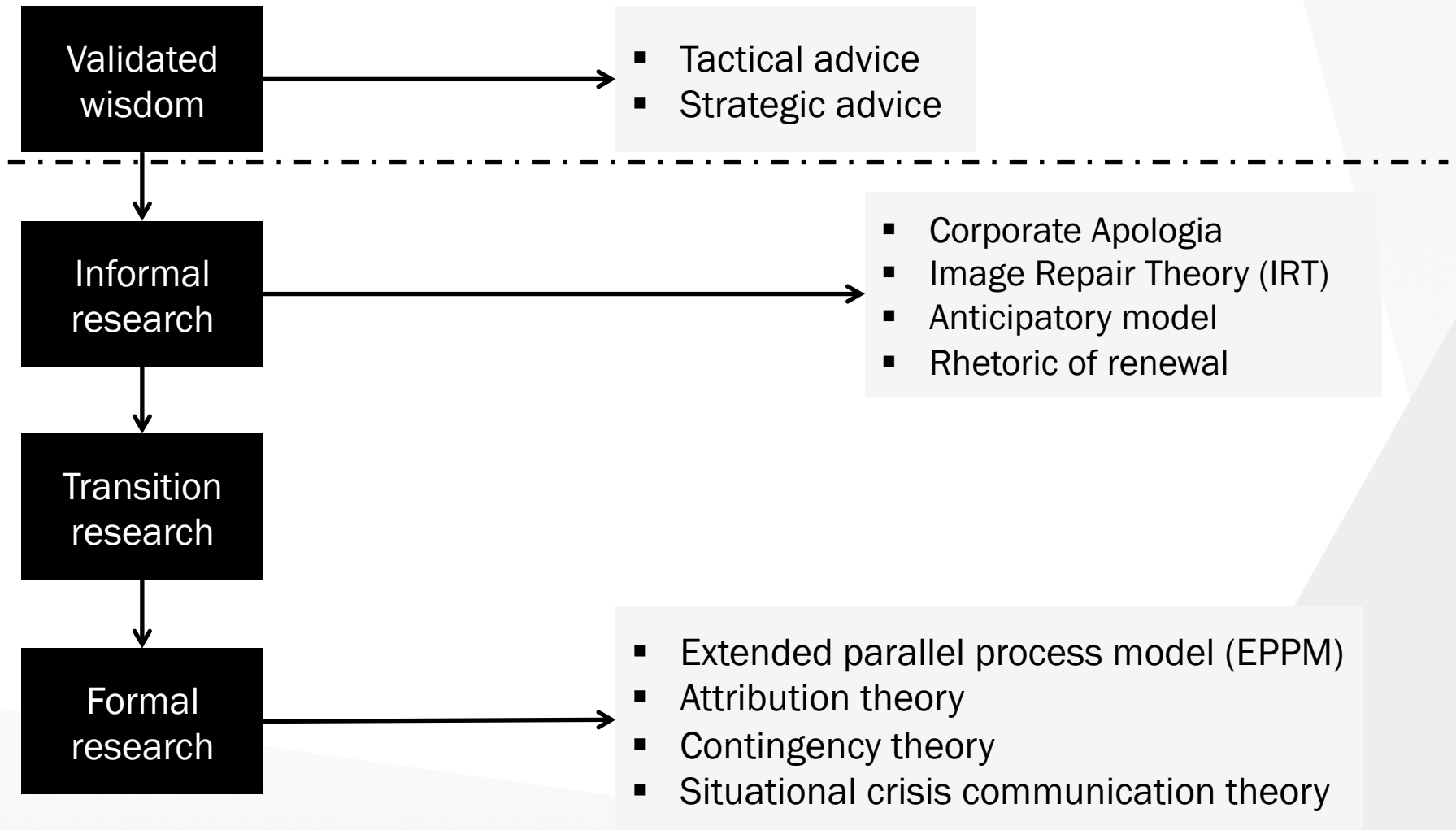
Theory and practice

- Researchers are focused on designing and testing theories that help explain phenomena. Practitioners **can benefit** from applying this knowledge in managing crises.
 - Good theories improve crisis management and are not simple academic exercises.
 - Theories contribute to evidence-based problem solving instead of opinion-based problem solving.

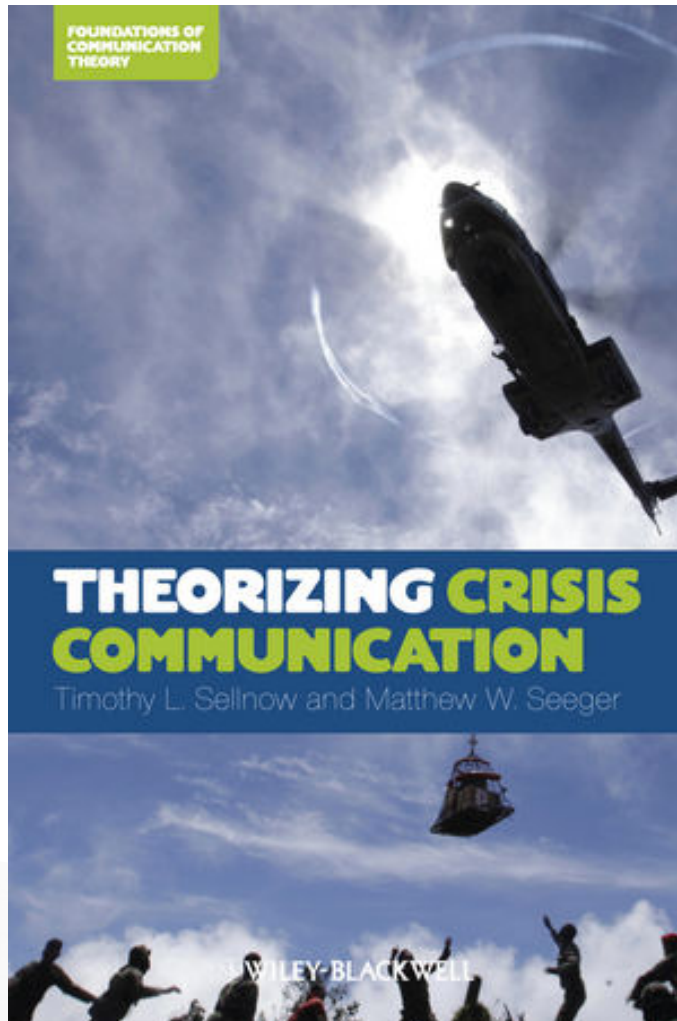
Using theory

- We make use of theories in theory building, theory testing and also in case analysis.
- Crisis communication incorporates theories from multiple fields:
 - Media & communication studies
 - Political science
 - Sociology
 - Psychology
 - Managerial studies...

Evolution crisis communication research



More about theories



Sellnow, T. L., & Seeger, M. W. (2013). *Theorizing Crisis Communication*. Somerset: Wiley-Blackwell.

Pre-crisis related models

- During the pre-crisis stage we focus on locating (**sensing**) and reducing the risk as well as **preparing** (training and designing) for a crisis.
- There is very little research done in this area, so it is a good area to go into if you are planning to do research.

Pre-crisis related models

Pre-crisis

Prevention (sensing)

anticipatory model of
crisis management

Preparation

EEPM (extended
parallel process
model)

proactive
symmetrical crisis
management process

- Prevention is the top priority of this model, one of the few that focuses on the sensing stage.
- The model employs vigilance during the pre-crisis phases to aid crisis decision making and prevention.

Anticipatory Model of Crisis Management

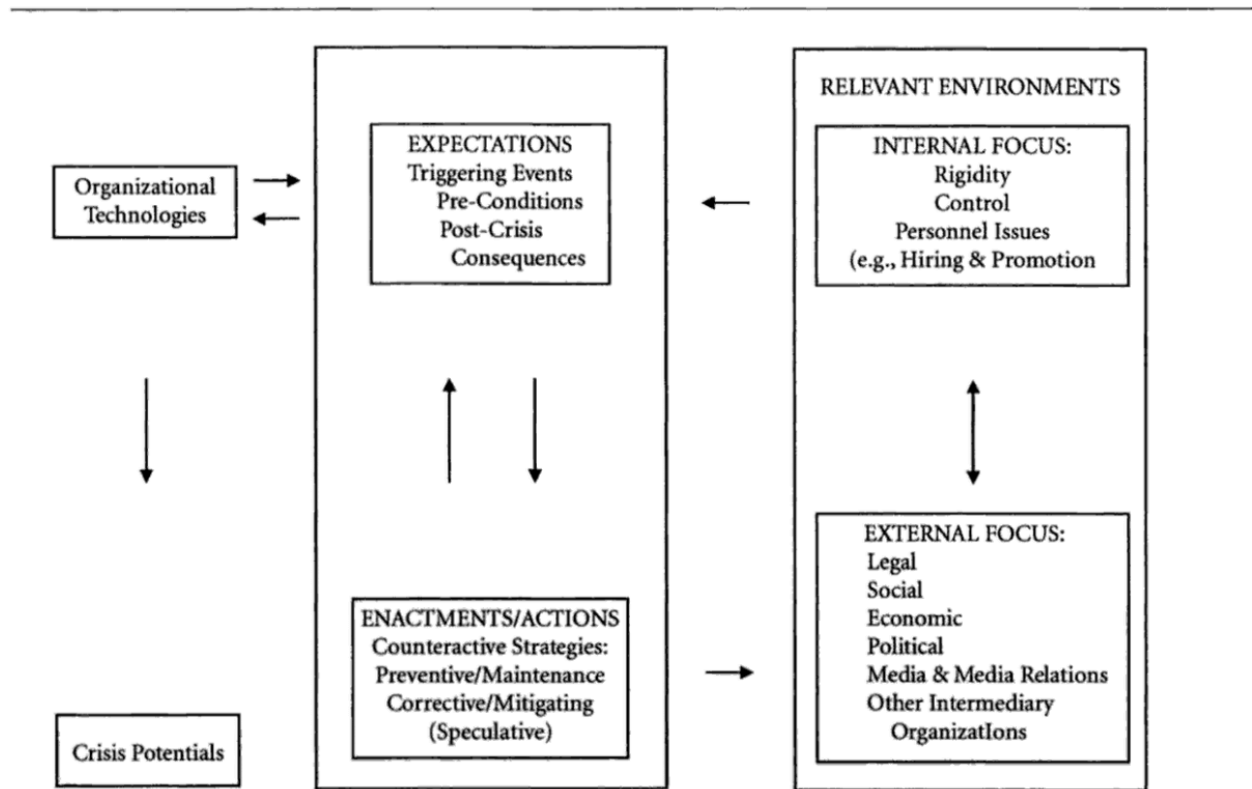


Figure 41.1. Anticipatory Model of Crisis Management

The anticipatory model guides practitioners toward a position in which they can proactively investigate their organizations to determine the most likely causes of technological crisis. With a foundation in anticipation and empowerment, the model optimizes the precautionary abilities of the organization to prevent crisis.

491

(Olaniran & Williams 2001)

Pre-crisis related models

Pre-crisis

Prevention (sensing)

anticipatory model of
crisis management

Preparation

EPPM (extended
parallel process
model)

proactive
symmetrical crisis
management process

- It's a 4 step process to manage crises.
- Stage 1 is about issue management. Early detection is crucial.
- Step 2 is about planning. Scanning leads to monitoring.
- Step 3 deals with crisis event and step 4 with post-crisis.

Pre-crisis related models

Pre-crisis

Prevention (sensing)

anticipatory model of crisis management

Preparation

EEPM (extended parallel process model)

proactive symmetrical crisis management process

- Helps explain the positive effect of exercises and risk information by looking at how people respond to messages.
- Fear can motivate people to action if a threat is perceived to be relevant and significant.

Extended Parallel Process Model

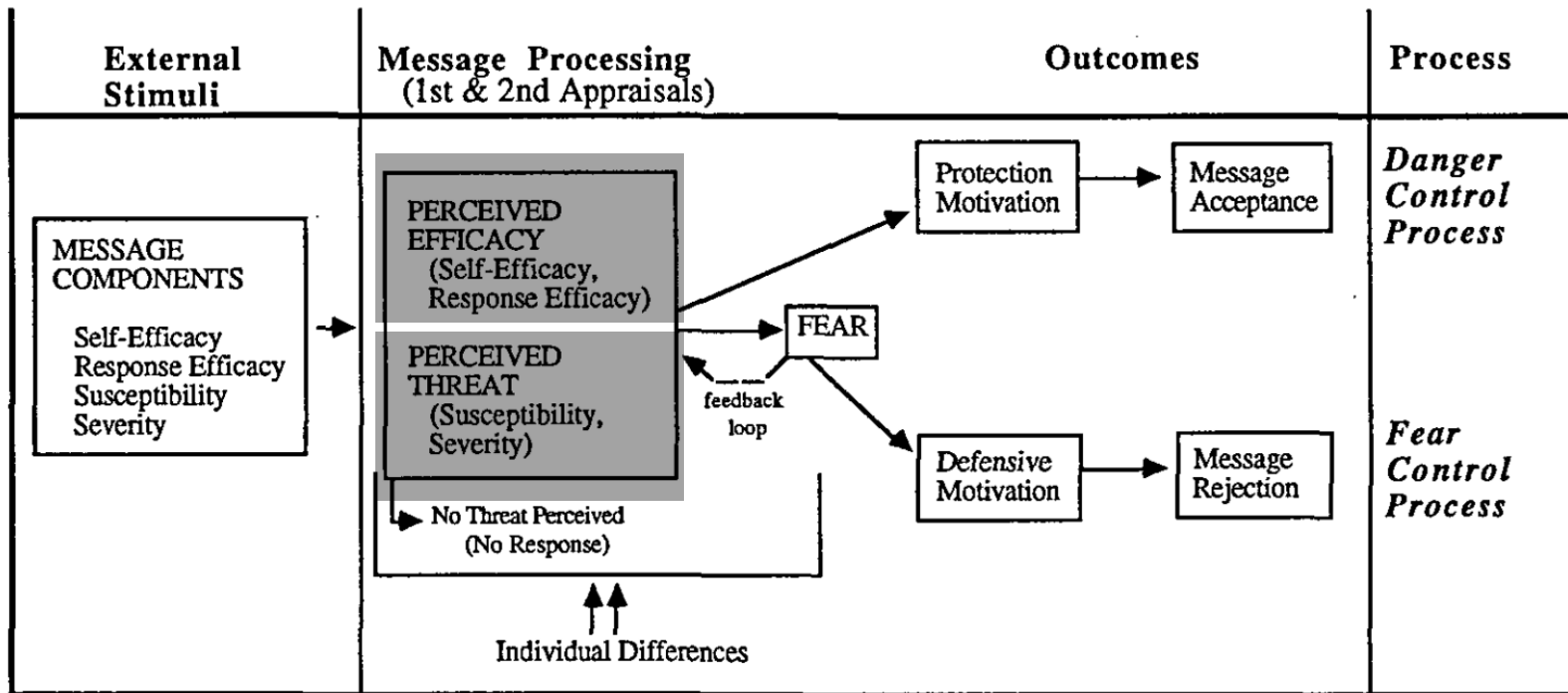


FIGURE 1
THE EXTENDED PARALLEL PROCESS MODEL (EPPM).

(Witte 1994, p. 113)

Extended Parallel Process Model

- For people to follow the advice given in a risk message, they must believe that the action will work (**response efficacy**) and that they can enact the proposed action (**self-efficacy**).
- If the response is believed not to work or that it cannot be executed, the risk and messages associated with it will be ignored.

Crisis Event Theories & Models

- This is where most research has gone into. This is because whatever an organisation does (or does not) during a crisis has a notable effect on the outcomes of the crisis.

Apologia

- Corporate apologia is the earliest communication-based approach to crises.
- It is based in **rhetoric** and it is built around the concept of apologia (ἄπολογία), which refers to speak in one's self-defence.
- **It does not mean “apology”**.
 - An organisation may deny, explain or apologize using **communication discourse** (rhetorical strategies).

Apologia

- Apologia originates in political communication. It was a set of four strategies to be used by politicians who were under attack because of wrongdoing.
 1. **Denial** – claiming no involvement
 2. **Bolstering** – attention is diverted to the good deeds of the person under attack
 3. **Differentiation** – removing action from the negative context
 4. **Transcendence** – placing actions in a broader context that is more favourable

Corporate Apologia

- **Corporate apologia** refers to the application of apologia to organisations, which was first done by Dionisopolous and Vibbert.
 - Politicians have public characters which need to be protected. Organisations have reputations to be protected.
 - Crises can be seen as attacks to reputation. When an organisation is accused of wrongdoing, actions need to be taken to defend it.

Corporate Apologia

- Hearit contributed the concept of **social legitimacy**. Defined as the consistency between organisational and stakeholder values.
 - Whenever stakeholders believe that an organisation does not have social legitimacy, they will oppose it (by not buying its products, by criticising it...).
 - Crises are important because they can reduce social legitimacy, an element of reputation.

Corporate Apologia

- There are, generally speaking, three strategies in corporate apologia:
 - **Conciliation:** organisations acknowledge the guilt and issue an apology. They should come with compensations and corrective actions.
 - **Redefinition:** crisis management teams use multiple strategies to diffuse the public's perception of guilt.
 - **Dissociation:** organisations try to separate themselves from the crisis.

Redefinition in corporate apologia

- There are several strategies to redefine guilt:
 - **Provocation** – guilt is diffused by claiming that actions were a reaction to hostilities.
 - **Defeasibility** – claims superior forces against which nothing could be done.
 - **Good intentions strategy** – presents past actions as in good faith, with unexpected consequences.
 - **Minimisation** – tries to lessen responsibility by claiming the problem is actually small.

Dissociation in corporate apologia

- There are three forms of dissociation:
 1. **Opinion-knowledge** - removes any connection between the organization and the crisis. “People think the organization is associated with the crisis, but facts say otherwise.”
 2. **Individual-group** - a person or group within the organization is responsible for the crisis, but not the entire organization.
 3. **Accident-essence** - admits the crisis did occur and that the organization is responsible, however it is argued that it was an isolated incident that does not represent the organisation.

Corporate apologia

- The success of apologiae at repairing damaged reputation and restoring social legitimacy **has been disputed.**
- In today's media saturated world, apologiae can be used in combination of other strategies, particularly when a crisis **specifically threatens the social legitimacy of an organisation.**

Pros and Cons of Apologia

- Pro

- It provides a very strong foundation for other theories and models.
- It was the first to identify many types of responses, later used by other theories.

- Cons

- It is very descriptive and no evaluative of effectiveness.
- It is up to practitioners to assess whether strategies are effective or not.

Image Repair Theory (IRT)

- Sometimes referred to as “image restoration theory”, “image repair theory” (IRT) was first proposed by Benoit in 1995.
 - It combines elements from rhetoric studies (apologia) and interpersonal communication.
 - It focuses on reputation (image) and how this can be repaired after an attack.
 - It is a classification of communication strategies that can be used to project a more favourable image of an organisation.

Image Repair Theory (IRT)

- The starting point of IRT is that an organisation has suffered an attack to its reputation. Attacks have two components:
 - An offensive act that threatens the reputation of an organisation.
 - An accusation of responsibility for the act.
- If there is no offensive act or no accusation, then there is no threat to reputation.

Image Repair Theory (IRT)

- Benoit suggests that, when making use of IRT, crisis managers must first ask themselves two questions:
 1. What accusation(s) or suspicion(s) threaten the image of the organisation?
 2. Who is or are the most important audiences?
- Understanding the audience is key to image repair, because **audiences will ultimately validate or invalidate** the authenticity of whatever a speaker tries to project

Image Repair Theory (IRT)

Denial	Evading Responsibility	Reducing offensiveness	Corrective action	Mortification
Simple denial	Provocation	Bolstering		
Shifting blame	Defeasibility	Differentiation		
	Accidental	Transcendence		
	Good intentions	Minimization		
		Attacking accuser		
		Compensation offer		

IRT - Denial

- Cut the connection between the crisis and the organization
 - **Simple Denial:** claim that the organization is not involved in the crisis;
 - **Shift the Blame:** blame someone or something other than the organization for the crisis.
 - It helps shift negative feelings the audience might have and answers the question, “if you did not do it, who did it?”

IRT – Evading Responsibility

- Accepting some connection to the crisis, but deny (or reduce) accountability.
 - **Provocation:** the crisis was a response to someone else's actions;
 - **Defeasibility:** lack of information about or control over the situation;
 - **Accidental:** did not mean for it to happen, “stuff” sometimes happens;
 - **Good intentions:** the organisation meant well.

IRT – Reducing Offensiveness

- Reducing offensiveness, makes the crisis “look better” for the organisation
 - **Bolstering**: remind stakeholders of the positive qualities and past actions;
 - **Differentiation**: compare act to more negative ones;
 - **Transcendence**: place act in a different context;
 - **Minimization**: claim little damage from the crisis;
 - **Attack Accuser**: challenge those promoting crisis;
 - **Compensation**: offer money or goods.

IRT – Corrective action & mortification

- **Corrective Action** goes beyond compensation or reinterpretation and implies repairing the damage done by a crisis.
 - Needs to communicate that changes will be introduced to prevent a repetition of the crisis.
 - Often corrective action is usually as high as an organisation will go.
- **Mortification:** ask for forgiveness; admit guilt and express regret.

Pros and Cons of IRT

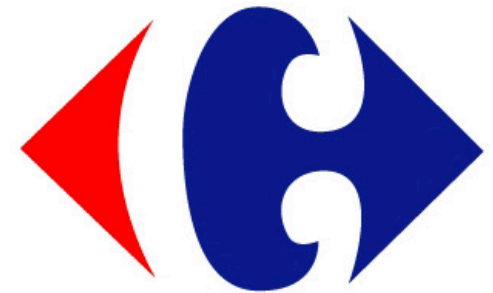
■ Pro

- It is one of the most widely applied theories, as it is adaptable.
- It is helpful when training spokespeople as it provides clues in choosing the best strategy

■ Cons

- If applied unethically, it might lead to organisations avoiding punishment.
- It is very descriptive and no evaluative of effectiveness.

Carrefour



家乐福

2008 Carrefour Boycott China



FUCK FRANCE FUCK OLD EU

5月1日, 全国人民共同抵制“家乐福”

2008 Carrefour Boycott China

- Carrefour is an international chain of hypermarkets, founded in 1958, based in France.
- Carrefour is the second largest retailer by revenue in the world.
- Carrefour is an internationalised brand present in dozens of countries, including China. Carrefour has been in China since 1995. By 2013 it had more than 200 stores

2008 Carrefour Boycott China

- In 2008, China organised the Beijing Olympics. China wanted to show the world all the progress the country had made since the reform and opening up. The 2008 Olympics were a great public diplomacy victory for China.
- Outside of China there were groups of people who were unsatisfied with the political situation in China and called for a boycott of the Olympics.

2008 Carrefour Boycott China

- Particularly vocal were human rights organisations that criticised lack of freedom of speech in China and attacked the government for its policy towards Western regions, such as Tibet.
- Protesters and NGOs like Human Rights Watch attacked the sponsors of the Olympic games repeatedly (McDonald's, Coca-Cola, Visa, Lenovo, Omega, Kodak...).

2008 Carrefour Boycott China

- Protesters also attacked the torch relay in different countries, such as the United States, Australia, Japan or France.
- During the segment in Paris, protesters attacked Chinese Paralympic fencer, Jin Jing, who defended the flame.
- The incident received a lot of media coverage in China and outside of China, even though the way the events were covered was substantially different.

2008 Carrefour Boycott China

- Prior to the Olympics two relevant events took place :
 - Demonstrations in Tibet in early 2008 received very negative coverage in the international media.
 - French President Nicolas Sarkozy had threatened with not attending the Olympic Opening Ceremony as a way to protest for what he saw was a lack of respect by Beijing of Human Rights.

2008 Carrefour Boycott China

- In China, netizens responded with anger to the torch incident.
 - There were SMS messages circulating around calling for a boycott.
 - Online, a movement was formed to call for a boycott of Carrefour.
- Out of the online movement, two developments affecting Carrefour occurred:
 - Rumours were spread online that Carrefour supported Tibet independence by financing the Dalai Lama.
 - Online pressure became physical as people started demonstrating in shops and causing damage to shops.

Exercise (I)

1. Work in groups of 3. Discuss the case with your colleagues and identify the main objective of the Carrefour crisis team.
 - After you have identified the objective send your response using Mentimeter.
 - Here you can check the answers to the exercise in class:

<https://www.mentimeter.com/s/2a391b2c2bb39eb7aa64648001550f14/96e48e2789fd>

Questions

