

Six Focus Areas for Crisis Communication

Copyright © 2004 by Peter M. Sandman. All Rights Reserved.

1. *Information content.* What do we know about this particular crisis? What do we want our audience to know? How do we communicate this content simply and effectively?
2. *Logistics and media.* How do we reach our audience with our information content? (This is everything from the choice between advertising and free media to the decision about how much photocopy paper to stockpile.)
3. *Audience assessment.* Who do we need to reach? What do they know, think, and feel already? How should this affect the way we communicate our information content?
4. *Audience involvement.* How do we solicit suggestions and feedback from our audience? How do we provide opportunities for people to be active rather than passive?
5. *Metamessaging.* How do we manage the non-information content of our messages (how reassuring to be, how confident to sound, how to address emotion, etc.)?
6. *Self-assessment.* How will our own values, emotions, and political problems affect our communications? What are we likely to get wrong? How can we overcome the internal barriers to good crisis communication?

The Presentation covers the last four areas only, and focuses especially on Number Five.