

Role of Leadership in establishing Crisis Communication strategies: Revisiting the three-stages model of Leadership Crisis Management

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Abstract: This study explores the pivotal role of leadership in establishing effective crisis communication strategies, revisiting the three-stage model of crisis management. By integrating the pre-crisis, crisis-event, and post-crisis stages with the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) and Image Restoration Theory, the research presents a comprehensive framework for leaders to anticipate, respond to, and recover from organizational crises. Through a meta-analysis of prior studies, the study highlights how leadership characteristics, decision-making, and communication strategies influence organizational resilience, stakeholder trust, and overall crisis outcomes. The proposed integrated model emphasizes customizing responses according to crisis type, severity, history, and priority audiences, demonstrating that proactive and strategic leadership can transform crises into opportunities for learning, innovation, and organizational growth.

Keywords: Crisis Leadership, Crisis Communication, Three-Stage Model, Image Restoration, Organizational Resilience.

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Introduction

The world today is witnessing large numbers and many types of crises, the extent of which varies between those crises that occur at the individual level, and those that affect groups of different organizations, whether at the local, national or even global levels. There is a famous proverb that says “a crisis is always there, it is the extent to which you respond to it that matters,” another, “corporates jump from one crisis to another, it is the gap between these crisis that count.” Some scholars believe that you can never solve a crisis, you can only avoid it or minimize its effect. A handful of researchers believe that a crisis can be resolved, but its effect is inevitable⁽¹⁾. Different literature and schools of thought had studied crisis management from various perspectives. A newly and well-established scholarly field has been done on Leadership in crisis. A leader is the outpost of an entity, he or she are the eyes from which followers perceive the corporate and its achievement. Whether a stakeholder, a consumer, an employee, or even a manager, they all look at the leader as this charismatic person that can lead, and they expect him or her to deal with any crisis no matter what⁽²⁾.

Given that the environment and conditions surrounding us are unstable, and the changes are rapid and successive, and because the relationships between the various organizations are driven by the logic of challenge and competition in order to achieve their

goals, this is what led to the complexity of the crises and the multiplicity of their dimensions⁽³⁾. In line with this, the continuity, growth and renewal of crises was and still is a threat that could affect various human societies, it has become among the factors and obstacles that are taken into account when thinking about developing plans and programs related to the lives of individuals and their needs that they hope to achieve or obtain individually or within the organizations they belong to⁽⁴⁾.

Crises take different forms that have varying degrees of danger that threatens the organization, and some of them may be internal and not noticed outside the organization, although it can cause devastation within the organization, and others may be general and take a wide range, as there are tremendous crises that affect many different organizations in the same time⁽⁵⁾. Nonetheless, whatever type of crisis and the complex problems it produces, leaders must face it. During any crisis, individuals inside or outside the organization quickly become confused, anxious, and illogical in their thinking. They are looking and waiting for the guidance that a voice from the top should provide, that can provide

¹ Boin, Arjen, and Paul T. Hart. *Public leadership in times of crisis: mission impossible?* 544.

² Barton, Laurence, *Crisis leadership now*, 1.

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³ Talish, Khaled. *The Role of Leadership in Crisis Management*, 65.

⁴ Harwati, Lusita Neti. *Crisis management: Determining specific strategies and leadership style for effective outcomes*, 171.

⁵ Harwati, *Crisis management: Determining specific strategies and leadership style for effective outcomes*, 172.

a measure of safety and stability, and that everything will be done to solve this crisis⁽⁶⁾.

Crisis Leadership, a fine tune

Leadership is one of the central factors in achieving the goals of organizations; creating the right balance for employees to operate, and striving to provide a suitable climate, in a way that makes them feel eager to pursue permanent development and change, as well as meeting their duties and achieving their self-actualization. All, while taking into consideration what organizations can do in terms of capabilities and opportunities, and despite what may hinder its continuation and survival from threats that may suddenly appear. Working under distinguished, creative and efficient leadership, and depending on the personal, ethical and cognitive characteristics leaders possess, as well as the communication pattern they use with their followers, good leader can face the crises they are exposed to⁽⁷⁾.

The role of the leader in managing the crisis is evident in its various stages, as the leader works before the occurrence of the crisis (*pre-crises*) to analyze potential risks, assess the capabilities and available resources, and prepare integrated plans to confront and overcome the crisis. The stage of the occurrence (*crisis-event*) of the crisis is the true test for the leader, their stewardship and for the plans that were drawn up in advance. The leader's role is evident in the *post-crisis phase* in trying to treat the consequences of that crisis, rebuild the organization, work to achieve its goals and restore balance within it⁽⁸⁾.

Study Problem

The topic of the role of leadership in crisis management in an organization has been chosen, based on the researcher's belief in the position and importance of leadership within any organization, and the pivotal roles it may play in its success or failure. As successful leadership is considered a compass that leads the organization to the direction it has drawn. In order to achieve this, various difficulties must be overcome, barriers and obstacles must be removed, crises should be avoided and their severity should be mitigated. This way, organizations can achieve their goals, survive, continue and grow, which are essentials to any organization. Additionally, the researcher is seeking to place leadership role in crisis management in a scientific form, based on what the researcher was able to gather from the contributions made by other scholars and thinkers on this topic.

Study Objectives

The various variables witnessed by the world showed the importance of leadership and its characteristics in dealing with crises and how to face the threats resulting from them. Accordingly, the researcher in this study tried to classify these issues in a comprehensive practical and descriptive analytical framework by investigating **how a leader can maintain the continuity and stability of the organization before, during, and after a crisis.**

In line with this, the sub-objectives of this study are:

1. To investigate if leadership play an important role in correcting the organization's orientations towards achieving its goals.
2. To see if leadership characteristics affect facing the various stages of the crisis within the organization.
3. To look into the necessity of having the leadership possessing creative methods in order to maintain organization's existence, position and even its growth, particularly, in light of the existence of organizations in an environment characterized by being turbulent, complex and changing?
4. To highlight the important components and factors that leaders rely on in their organizations to overcome crises.

Methodology

The researcher used a brief design of **meta-analysis** of studies done on the topic in-hand. A meta-analysis is an analytical methodology designed for the systematic evaluation and summarization of results from a number of individual studies. The purpose of this is not simply to summarize existing knowledge, but to develop a new understanding of the research problem using logical reasoning. The main objectives of the meta-analysis include analyzing differences in outcomes between studies and increasing the precision with which effects are estimated. Below are the studies the researcher used for the analysis, which she reflected on the integrated model presented later in this study:

- A study by **Kapucu and Uston (2017)** on executive public leaders in Turkey investigated the influence on leadership competencies on the perceived effectiveness of crisis management. They used the leadership action cycle model, and found that task-oriented leadership as a competency has the highest level of impact on the effectiveness of crisis management. Furthermore, they developed a competency model of leadership to be utilized in the public management practice. After all, a mismanaged crisis can damage the reputation of the government and its public trust⁽⁹⁾.
- **Gruber et. al. (2014)** wrote about Crisis Management and Leadership in the age of social media. Their study focused on the power of social media in magnifying crisis, and the role of leadership in dealing with crisis. They emphasized on the importance of sense-making as a first step towards establishing a response to any unexpected crisis. Further recommendations were listed for new executives as a guidance in their crisis management, particularly, in the context of the unmerciful, "black" side of social media⁽¹⁰⁾.
- **Jia and Gu (2012)** studied the relationship between transformational leadership and effective leadership in crisis situation following the sense-making approach of Weick (1970), and with implications of emotional control and quality of leader-member exchange status. They concluded that indeed, transformational leadership highly correlated with effective leadership in dealing

⁶ Hackman, Michael Z., and Craig E. Johnson. *Leadership: A communication perspective*, 441.

⁷ Zaccaro, Stephen J., Andrea L. Rittman, and Michelle A. Marks. *Team leadership*, 453.

⁸ Zaccaro, Stephen J., Andrea L. Rittman, and Michelle A. Marks. *Team leadership*, 442.

⁹ Kapucu, Naim, and Yusuf Ustun. *Collaborative crisis management and leadership in the public sector*. 548.

¹⁰ Gruber, Daniel A., Ryan E. Smerek, Melissa C. Thomas-Hunt, and Erika H. James. *The real-time power of Twitter: Crisis management and leadership in an age of social media*. 163.

with crises. The earthquake that struck China in 2008 was used as a case study⁽¹¹⁾.

- A study by **Abu Rumman (2016)** aimed to uncover the level of transformational leadership practice and preparedness for crisis management in the two Arab Potash companies and Jordanian phosphate mines, in addition to knowing the impact of the transformational leadership practice in its various dimensions on preparing for crisis management in these two companies. The results showed that the level of practice of the transformational leadership dimensions in general and in the different stages is within the medium level except for the ideal effect dimension, which was found to be practiced at a high level, and the level of preparedness for crisis management was at a medium level. It also showed that the practice of transformational leadership explains (64.1%) of preparedness for crisis management, and that the most influential dimension of transformational leadership in preparing for crisis management is the empowerment dimension, followed by the individual consideration dimension and then the intellectual arousal dimension. The study presented a set of recommendations, including: Encouraging the senior management of the Arab Potash Company and the Jordanian phosphate mines to adopt the transformational leadership style with its five dimensions, because its application leads to the success for facing crises, which raises the level of competitiveness of these two companies⁽¹²⁾.
- **Ulmer (2012)** in his study titled "Increasing the Impact of Thought Leadership in Crisis Communication," highlighted how the majority of organizations fail to communicate effectively during crisis, and how it is important to apply normative theories for guiding crisis communicators in communicating effectively. He then concluded "Only through changing our direction in crisis communication thought leadership are we going to be able to make the kind of positive impact that society needs to manage its future crises"⁽¹³⁾.
- Another study by **Talish (2010)** about the role of Leadership in Crisis Management between Theoretical Presentation and Practical Practice, where he dealt with the conceptual frameworks of crisis by listing its definitions, as well as its characteristics and interrelationships with some terms similar to them and their causes. Then he touched on the requirements and foundations of crisis management and the strategies and objectives of crisis management, followed by the most important concepts and theories that tried to explain leadership and the decision-making process during crises⁽¹⁴⁾.
- An interesting study by **Preston et. al. (2010)** coined the phrase of "blame game" and how leaders are supposed to

confront and cope with when crisis takes place. They emphasized the important role of leadership style in this context, and how leaders should forge pathways through Public Inquiries, criticism, and political verdict. They applied this framework on the Bush Administration dealing with the Katrina Hurricane Crisis of 2005⁽¹⁵⁾.

- **Wooten and James (2008)** in their article titled "Linking Crisis Management and Leadership Competencies: The Role of Human Resource Development" wrote how executives over emphasize their focus on communication and PR in crisis management, and neglect the role of leadership in this process. They measured a complex set of competencies into five different but complementary stages that are: signal detection, preparation and prevention, damage control and containments, business recovery, and reflection and learning. They concluded that this overlooking of leadership role in crisis falls on the shoulders of HR, and highlighted the role this department should play in "providing an opportunity for organizations to create a competitive advantage"⁽¹⁶⁾.
- **Fred Garcia (2006)** in his article "Strategy and Leadership," analyzed the criticality of effective crisis response to help the company survive a crisis. He added that many leaders, despite their clear vision and leadership skills, undermine their crisis response strategies, and therefore, put their companies in jeopardy. Then, he concluded "Effective leaders see crisis response not as an interruption in their stewardship of a company, but as the test of that stewardship"⁽¹⁷⁾.
- The study of **Halverson et. al. (2004)** went beyond the role of leadership in crisis management, to investigate how self-sacrificial behavior of leaders and situational crisis influence how followers perceive them. They found that leaders who exhibited this behavior in crisis are perceived more charismatic by their followers, than leaders who self-sacrificed in the absence of crisis. Further to that, they concluded that this kind of behavior coupled with leaders confidence and assuredness make a latent positive power that has a psychological influence on their followers comfort feelings toward them⁽¹⁸⁾. In line with this study, comes a prominent theory of Charismatic leadership. Particularly, the *Sociological Approach of Charisma*, coined by Max Weber, who defined a Charismatic leaders as the person with an extraordinary talents that magically connects with a hidden power that everyone would like to parish. He added that a Charismatic leader has a radical vision through which he or she views that conflict and deal with it accordingly. Finally, and mostly related to the topic of leadership and crisis is the Weber's believe that the talent of Charismatic leader is always evident in cases of

¹¹ Zhang, Zhe, Ming Jia, and Lihong Gu. *Transformational leadership in crisis situations: evidence from the People's Republic of China*. 408.

¹² Abu Rumman, Sami. *Influence of Transformational leadership in preparation for crisis management*. 713.

¹³ Ulmer, Robert R. *Increasing the impact of thought leadership in crisis communication*. 523.

¹⁴ Talish, Khaled. *The Role of Leadership in Crisis Management*, 69.

¹⁵ Boin, Arjen, Paul 'T. Hart, Allan McConnell, and Thomas Preston. *Leadership style, crisis response and blame management: The case of Hurricane Katrina*. 708.

¹⁶ Wooten, Lynn Perry, and Erika Hayes James. *Linking crisis management and leadership competencies: The role of human resource development*. 352.

¹⁷ Garcia, Helio Fred. *Effective leadership response to crisis*. 8.

¹⁸ Halverson, Stefanie K., Courtney L. Holladay, Stephanie M. Kazama, and Miguel A. Quiñones. *Self-sacrificial behavior in crisis situations: The competing roles of behavioral and situational factors*. 263.

unstable or crisis situation. A challenging view to Weber's Sociological Approach of Charisma is the *Behavioral or Attribution of Approach* suggested by Behaviorists who said that you don't need a crisis to unleash your charismatic talent; it is not about who you are, it is about how you behave in crisis⁽¹⁹⁾.

- A study by **Al-Baz (2001)** dealt with the nature of crisis and its most important stages and analyzed the mechanisms of crisis management, as well as identified the characteristics of leadership and highlighted the role of creative/unconventional leadership in crisis management. She emphasized that crises come in succession and are man-made, and that organizations do not only seek confrontation, but rather seek to prevent their occurrence⁽²⁰⁾.

Theoretical Framework

Based on the literature review above, I can fairly assume that leadership style matters (Abu Rumman 2016; Preston et. al. 2010, Talish, 2010, Wooten and James, 2008, Halverson et. al., 2004, Al-Baz, 2001), and was clearly evident that application of the right communication strategies lie at the core of crisis management (Kapucu and Uston, 2017, Jia and Gu, 2012, Ulmer, 2012). Accordingly, the research decided to integrate a models and two theories; the *three-stage model of crisis management*, *situational crisis communication theory*, and *image restoration theory* as the framework for this study. The main hypothesis of the model is that leaders should shift their communication strategy while the crisis is developing. In other words, different strategies across the stages of pre-crisis, crisis event, and post-crises⁽²¹⁾. The main hypothesis of the SCCT theory is when the organization is exposed to a crisis, the selection of the appropriate response is by defining the type and responsibility of the crisis and the level of threat and reputational damage that will inflict on the organization⁽²²⁾. Finally, image restoration theory: Instead of describing types of crisis situations or stages of crisis, image restoration theory focuses on message options.⁽²³⁾ In other words, what can a company say when faced with a crisis? This theory is more comprehensive than previous theories.

The three-stage model of crisis management

Pre-crisis leadership

Before crisis, leaders are the eyes and ears of the organization. They should understand what is really happening around them; what are possible threats, and what weak points they have, and more. They even should establish a direct back-up plan when the crisis hits. The main duties of the leader are summarize hereunder.

In this phase, leaders should be able to⁽²⁴⁾:

1. **Recognize danger signs** and pick signals of any external or internal threat.
2. **Look for trouble** and reveal weakness that could turn into crisis and effect the organization.
3. **Learn the techniques of Mitroff and Alpasian** that include Wheel of crises, Internal assassins, Mixed metaphors, and Spy games.
4. **Create a Crisis Management Plan (CMP)** to cope with each type of emergency. This includes the following elements:
 - a. Coverage page
 - b. Introduction
 - c. Acknowledgement form
 - d. Rehearsal dates page
 - e. First action page
5. **Create a Crisis Management Team (CMT)**, depending on the crisis of course, but taking into consideration that it should comprise of the following:
 - a. Attorney
 - b. Operational management
 - c. Financial manager
 - d. IT manager
 - e. Expert to coordinate with government agencies
 - f. The CEO himself or herself
6. **Develop a contact sheet for the CMT** and any additional expertise that can be of a use to the crisis.
7. **Establish Credibility**, simply stating, the better your organization performance and reputation are, the stronger the support you get from officials and stakeholders.

Leading during the Crisis Event

In this stage, the crisis broke out, and different strategies should be used by the leader. He or she should serve the role of a spokesperson and decision-maker led organization's core values.

In this phase, leaders should be able to⁽²⁵⁾:

1. **Initiate Action and Coordinate Activities**, simply stating, a leader should recognize that a crisis took place, and act accordingly (put CMP into action, mobilize CMT, concentrate on containing the threat).
2. **Act as a Spokesperson**, and take primary responsibility to reflect the entire organization in order to avoid misleading information.
3. **Engage in Vigilant Decision Making**, as in weighing alternative and choosing the best for the organization. That after:
 - a. narrowing of cognitive processes by mainly consulting those in charge
 - b. dealing with high volume of information and filtering irrelevant data
 - c. not falling for homogeneity of group member, which may limit prospects
 - d. focusing on learning and adapting particularly in case of surprise
 - e. making sure that team units are managing the decisions correctly.
4. **Connect with Vision and Values**, by reminding followers of the organization's vision and values, and to work accordingly.

¹⁹ Hackman, Michael Z., and Craig E. Johnson. *Leadership: A communication perspective*, 126.

²⁰ Al-Baz, Afaf. *Leadership role in crisis management*. 70.

²¹ Hackman, Michael Z., and Craig E. Johnson. *Leadership: A communication perspective*, 126.

²² Coombs, W. Timothy. *Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory*. 163.

²³ Blaney, Joseph R., William L. Benoit, and LeAnn M. Brazeal. *Blowout!: Firestone's image restoration campaign*. 379.

²⁴ Hackman, et.al. *Leadership: A communication perspective*, 444-451.

²⁵ Hackman, et.al. *Leadership: A communication perspective*, 452-455.

Leading post-crisis

This phase is critical in recovering the organizations image and restoring it. Also, it is considered a lesson to learn from, and help building resilience against future similar crises.

In this phase, leaders should be able to⁽²⁶⁾:

1. **Rebuild the Organization's Image**, which means, restoring its image. This can be done using a typology of image restoration strategies that are:
 - a. Denial
 - b. Evading responsibility
 - c. Reducing offensiveness
 - d. Minimization
 - e. Differentiation
 - f. Transcendence
 - g. Attack the accusers
 - h. Compensation
 - i. Corrective action
 - j. Mortification
2. **Learn from Experience**, because crisis is likely to return!
3. **Foster Resilience**, and the ability to bounce back from crisis events.
4. **Promote Healing**, through taking corrective actions.

The three-stages model of crisis management hypothesize that regardless of type, crises pass through the same series of stages; the pre-crisis stage, the crisis event stage, and the post-crisis stage. In line with this, the situational crisis communication theory comes into action to compensate for the "regardless of type" phrase above.

The situational crisis communication theory (SCCT)

As mentioned above, the theory assumes that when the organization is exposed to a crisis, the selection of the appropriate response is its suitability with the type and responsibility of the crisis and the level of threat and reputational damage that will inflict the organization, and **there are a set of indicators for assessing responsibility and directing the organization's response**⁽²⁷⁾:

1. First, determining the type of crisis: which in turn helps us in making a **preliminary assessment** of the organization's ability to control the event and what is the responsibility of the organization, as the organization's ability to control the crisis and its ability to control the event affects the extent of the **blame** assigned to it. It should be noted here, there are many types of crises and fall into three clusters, namely: the victims cluster, the accidental cluster, and the preventable cluster⁽²⁸⁾.
2. The theory also assumes that there are two main factors that could lead to adjustments to these initial assessments of responsibility for the crisis, namely **severity** and **history of performance**. Whereas, the severity of the crisis is the amount of damage caused by the crisis, whether it is material, human or environmental, and the history of performance includes the nature of the

relationship with stakeholders before the crisis and the organization's past behavior, including its behavior in previous crises⁽²⁹⁾.

3. After studying the extent of the institution's responsibility to the crisis, reducing or even reforming the threat and damage to the organization is through the **appropriate communicative response** issued by the organization, which is based on the **type of crisis** and the organization's responsibility for the event in a way that meets the expectations of the public⁽³⁰⁾.

Image restoration theory

This theory offers five broad categories of image repair strategies, some with variants that respond to such threats. Denying and evading responsibility addresses the first component of a disguised attack, and denies or diminishes the responsibility of the accused for the act in question. Attack reduction and corrective action, and the third and fourth broad categories of image recovery, relate to the second component of a disguised attack: the limitation of the attack of the act attributed to the accused. The last general strategy, mortification, attempts to restore the image by asking for forgiveness. All summarized below⁽³¹⁾:

Denial⁽³²⁾

1. One general technique for repairing an image, with two tactics, is denial. The company may *deny* that the act occurred, that the company did it, or that the act was harmful to anyone.
2. The second form of denial is *blaming*, arguing that another person or organization is actually responsible for the aggressive act.

Evasion of responsibility⁽³³⁾

This image restoration strategy has four tactics.

1. The company can say that its act was merely a response to another's aggressive reaction, and that the behavior can be seen as a reasonable response to this provocation.
2. Another form of evasion of liability is verification. Here, the company claims a lack of information about or control over important elements of the situation.
3. The allegation that the offensive action happened by mistake. If a company can convince the public that the action in question happened by mistake, it should be held accountable to a lesser extent, and the damage to that action's image should be minimized.
4. Actions can indicate that the aggressive behavior was carried out with good intentions.

Reducing aggression⁽³⁴⁾

A company that has been accused of wrongful acts can also try to reduce perceived aggression of the act. This image restoration strategy has six tactics.

1. First, the company may use reinforcement to reinforce the public's positive feelings towards itself, in order to

²⁹ Ibid. 171.

³⁰ Ibid. 166.

³¹ Blaney, Joseph R., William L. Benoit, and LeAnn M. Brazeal. *Blowout!: Firestone's image restoration campaign*. 379-392.

³² Ibid. 381.

³³ Ibid. 383.

³⁴ Ibid. 384.

²⁶ Ibid., 456-466.

²⁷ Coombs, W. Timothy. *Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory*. 163-175.

²⁸ Ibid. 168.

compensate for the negative feelings associated with the wrongful act.

2. The second possibility is to try to reduce the negative feelings associated with the wrongful act.
3. Third, the company can use differentiation, where the action is distinguished from other similar but more offensive acts.
4. The fourth way to reduce attack is override, which attempts to place the action in a more appropriate context or frame.
5. Fifth, those accused of wrongdoing may decide to attack the accuser.
6. Compensation is the ultimate form of limiting an attack. If it is acceptable to the victim, the corporate image should be improved.

Corrective action⁽³⁵⁾

Another general strategy for image recovery is corrective action, as the company promises to correct the problem. This action can take the form of restoring the pre-offensive situation, and / or a promise to prevent the offensive action from being repeated.

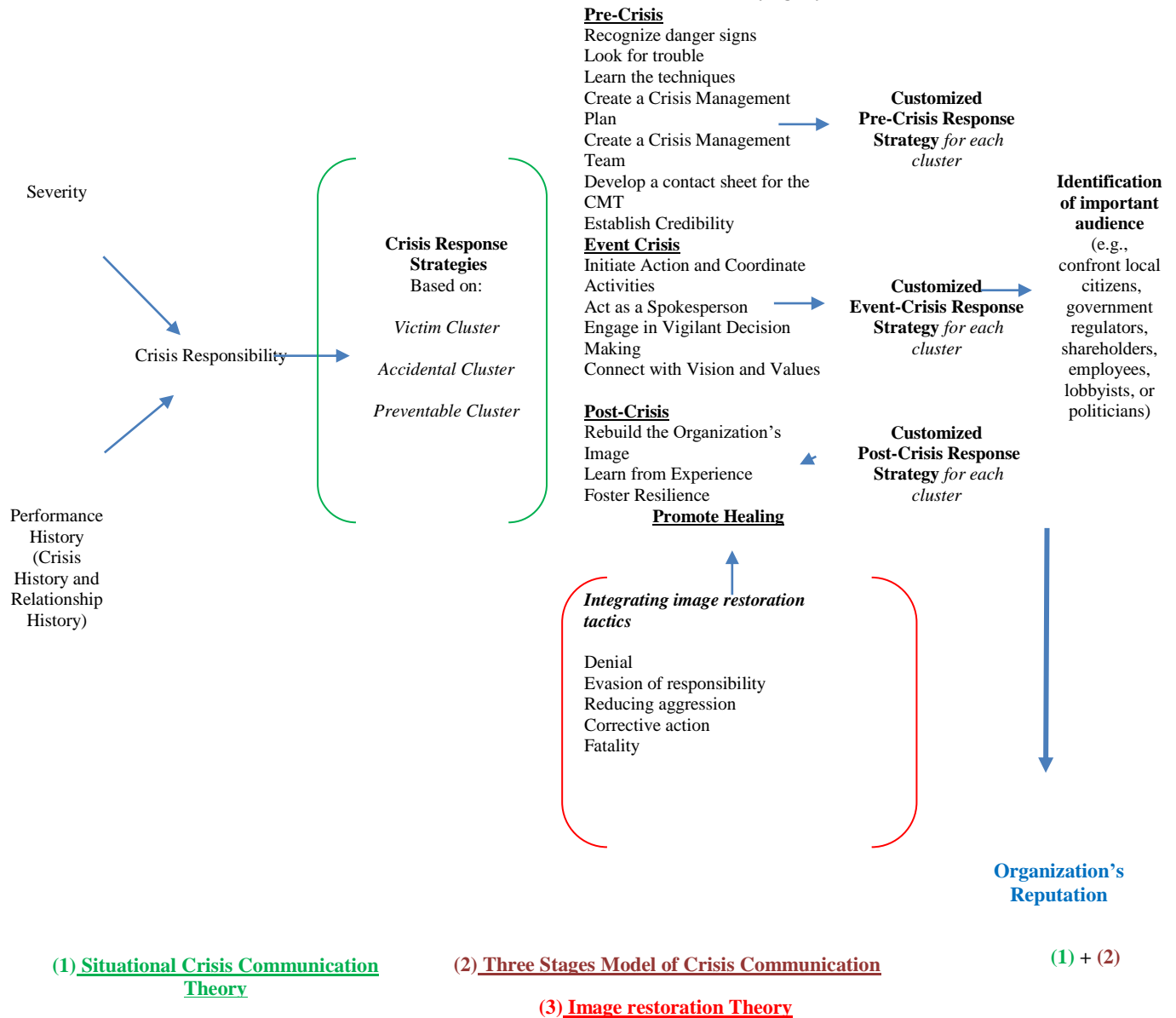
Fatality⁽³⁶⁾

The general final strategy for restoring the image is recognition and forgiveness.

Finally, companies often address multiple audiences. For example, a company may confront local citizens, government regulators, shareholders, employees, lobbyists, and politicians. Each audience will likely have diverse interests, anxieties, and goals. The crisis leader should identify the most important audience (or give priority to important audiences)⁽³⁷⁾

³⁵ Ibid. 388.

³⁶ Ibid. 390.



Conclusion

So how can a leader maintain the continuity and stability of the organization before, during, and after a crisis?

Leadership is one of the most important factors affecting the course of crises in any organization. As the masterminds in it, Leaders are able to make organizations ready and prepared to face crises efficiently. The role of the leader in managing the crisis is evident in its various stages. This study was an attempt to illustrate a more rigid but creative set of ideas that facilitate to leaders their crisis management tools through these stages. After a thorough revision of related literature, the researcher developed an *integrated model of leader crisis communication strategy* that triangulated the *Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT)* as the basis on which crisis thinking starts, then it was coupled with the *three stages model of crisis management* where leaders work before the occurrence of the crisis (pre-crises), during the crisis (crisis event), and after the crisis (post-crisis). Finally, tactics of *image restoration theory* were assimilated in the third step of the model and was customized to each audience with accordance to their priority. The study concludes that indeed leadership crisis communication strategies matters, and leaders do make the difference if they operate proactively with precision.

According to the pre-described integrated model that the researcher developed:

1. Leaders must first identify crisis responsibility on the basis of severity and past performance.
2. Then, they should define the type of crisis they are facing, and to which cluster it belongs (whether a victim, accidental, or preventable cluster).
3. A third step would be to customize the communication strategy on the basis of stage of the crisis (pre-crisis, even crisis, and post-crisis).
4. A fourth step is to use tactics of image restoration theory to repair damaged image and sustain it.
5. Finally, to determine priority audience (if necessary) and customize the messaging tactic accordingly.

It is true that leaders do play a vital role in correcting the organization orientation and achieving its goals through the use of the right leadership style, and inspired by their Charismatic characteristics on all the three stages of crisis. Furthermore, the integrated model above unearths specific communication strategies on the basis of crisis maturity which at the very end offers leaders more rigid but creative methods and insights of dealing with the

wave of crisis an organization might face. Finally, Leadership's ingenuity lies in the perception that the crisis and the risks it carries can be transformed into opportunities to unleash the creative capabilities that exploit the crisis as an opportunity to reformulate conditions and find effective solutions.

And yes, leadership matters!

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