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Crisis Comm & Media Relations E-Newsletter

January 15, 2014

Now in our 12th Year of Publication

Winner of the 2012 Gold "Rocks Award" for Best Newsletter from the Public Relations Society of America - Cleveland Chapter

[Bruce Hennes](#)   [Barbara Paynter APR](#)  
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Our regular office number is 216-321-7774.

However, if your situation is [DEFCON 2](#) (critical and extraordinarily time-sensitive), please call our 24/7 Emergency Crisis Comm Hotline at 216-223-8771.

If necessary, leave a voicemail and we'll get back to you within 30 minutes.



The New Jersey Bridgegate Scandal

For any of our readers old enough to remember the "dirty tricks" that came to light during the Watergate scandal of the 1970s, there's a definite feeling of déjà vu coming from New Jersey. As information comes to light about the activities of Gov. Chris Christie's staff, it's stunning to read not only what these staff members did, but also what they documented in email.

What lessons can we learn from this crisis? The best way to have avoided this crisis, of course, would be to behave appropriately in the first place. A lot of crises could be avoided by doing the right thing.

But it's hard not to wonder what members of Gov. Christie's staff were thinking as they wrote the incriminating emails. Forty years ago, no one could trace the Watergate scandal all the way to the top until it was revealed that former President Richard Nixon had a recording device in the Oval Office. Ultimately, it was the content of those tapes that made it impossible for him to

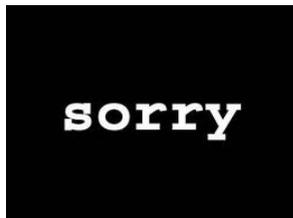
remain in office.

Today, no one needs a hidden tape recorder. People document their lives on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram, and send countless emails and text messages. This information is archived and none of it is secret - most certainly not for public employees! But private companies are also vulnerable, since these documents can be subpoenaed in a court case or leaked to the media.

Your best protection is a good social media policy. Employees should understand that their social media posts on social media can reflect on the organization. Your policy should strictly prohibit sharing anything confidential or proprietary, lay out clear ethical standards that prohibit offensive comments - especially if they can be traced back to your organization - and stress the importance of transparency. And your email policy should include guidelines for personal use of company email, what constitutes prohibited content, document retention, treatment of confidential data and privacy expectations (if any).

Remember, it only takes one employee to damage the reputation of an entire organization.

Barbara Paynter, APR
Hennes Paynter Communications



I'm So Very, Very Sorry

[Seeking Redemption, Sometimes With a Familiar Ring](#) *New York Times*

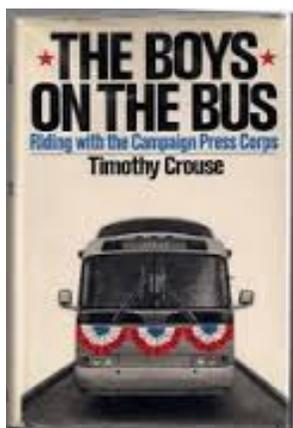
Gov. Chris Christie's lengthy press conference after the George Washington Bridge scandal erupted had many echoes of previous political moments of regret. Herewith, strung together, apologies culled from notable speeches and statements made in the aftermath of wrongdoing or other officeholder embarrassments.



Body Language

[10 Simple and Powerful Body Language Tips](#) *CommPro.biz*

It's not what you say - it's how you say it. From the timing of your first remark to the way you move and stand.



Did Twitter Kill the Boys on the Bus?

[Twitter and Campaign Press Coverage](#)

New Hampshire Institute of Politics

Peter Hamby, who covered the 2008 and 2012 presidential campaigns for CNN, talks about his study of the impact of Twitter on media behavior and campaign press strategy. Once again, we are reminded that Twitter is not about what latte your friend ordered at Starbucks. In fact, it's already fundamentally altered the way reporters work - and it's not going away. The scariest quote came during the Q&A when a college student said, "I don't ever have to read a newspaper or turn on my TV set to get the news - I just check Twitter."



Apology, Revisited

[Chiara de Blasio and the New Art of Damage Control](#) *PRNewser*

On Christmas Eve, New York City mayor-to-be Bill de Blasio's transition team released a candid, one-on-one video in which his daughter Chiara tells of suffering through depression while at college and eventually seeking professional help after self-medicating with alcohol and marijuana. It's a great example of the latest step in the evolution of damage control.



No More Walter Cronkites, For Sure

[Many Americans Can't Recognize Anchor Brian Williams](#) *Poynter*

Only 27 percent of people surveyed by Pew researchers correctly identified Brian Williams when shown a picture of the NBC anchor, Pew reports. Older Americans were far more likely to recognize Williams than people under 30: 34 percent of those over 65 knew who he was, while only 15 percent of those under 30 did.



It's Not a 24-7 News Cycle - It's a 10-Second Cycle

[Communicating Risk Via Twitter](#) *The Face of the Matter*

Press releases don't really have a fast turnaround, and besides, they're the worst way to push out risk communication messages (e.g., do this, not that). Twitter works really well for a number of reasons. First, it's direct: I, the communicator, am talking to you, the recipient. Second, it forces us to be short and direct: short messages have been shown to be more easily uptaken. Finally, it's easily share-able: it's easy to spread messages amongst target populations who've already set up information dissemination channels. Here, a very short case study.

News From Hennes Paynter



Hennes Paynter Communications

During the last year, we helped more than 100 clients respond to crisis situations, manage longer-term issues or prepare for media interviews. We are proud of the counsel we provided to help large and small businesses, colleges and universities, government agencies, healthcare and nonprofit organizations maintain and improve their reputations.

The staff at Hennes Paynter ended the year on a high note by taking home the coveted "**Best of Show Award**" at the Greater Cleveland Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America's Cleveland Rocks Awards ceremony in December. We also were recognized with a Gold "Rocks" Award in the crisis communications category.

We've brought home Gold "Rocks" Awards in the past, but we are most proud of the "Best of Show" Award because it's so rarely awarded for crisis communications. In fact, that has happened only once before in

the 11 years the award has been presented; that was in 2009, when we shared the award with another agency for our work on the national peanut butter recall.

To read more about our award,
"Doing the Right Thing: How a Company's Fortright Crisis Response Preserved its Reputation and Maintained Customer Confidence," please click [here](#)



Barbara Paynter, Scott Juba, Bruce Hennes, Nora Jacobs & Howard Fencel with "Best of Show" Award for their crisis communications work.



Hennes Paynter supports [WCPN-FM](#) and [WKSU-FM](#), Cleveland and Akron's National Public Radio affiliates.



[Hennes Paynter Communications](#) is one of the few agencies in the U.S. focused exclusively on crisis communications. To talk to us about our crisis management services, please contact us at 216-321-7774.



The Book of Tebow

[How a Sports Illustrated Reporter Captured the Athlete in 'The Book of Tebow'](#) Poynter

Earlier this year, Sports Illustrated writer Thomas Lake embarked on a challenging project: to profile Tim Tebow, an athlete who's been covered as thoroughly as any in America and who didn't want Lake to write about him. With limited access to his subject, what Lake produced was a robust, seven-part, 15,000-word story. It explores oft-analyzed Tebow topics - his successes and failures, his inability to get a job, his faith - but in a much deeper way. It's a story powered by the author's voice and transparency. In an email interview for the Poynter Excellence Project, Lake told us how he did it.



Short Takes

[SuperBowl 2014 Ad Teasers](#) YouTube AdBlitz

They're putting them up on YouTube already. Our favorite so far: [Pepsi](#)

[Thank You, Mom - Pick Them Back Up](#) Tide

Another ad, in advance of the Winter Olympics in Sochi. Yes, it's totally manipulative, but you've a heart of stone if you don't at least smile.

[Rejection Letters Received by Bestselling Authors](#) *Mental Floss*

[Woman Hears Father's Voice for First Time on Vintage Broadcast](#) *Poynter*

[Chasing Ice](#)

Chasing Ice won the award for Excellence in Cinematography at the 2012 Sundance Film Festival and the Best Documentary from the International Press Association. You'll never look at an ice cube the same way again.



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Upcoming Events & Seminars



We often do presentations about crisis communications for industry trade groups, law firms, bar associations, hospital, education and other professional associations. Often, those events are open to the public or for a fee payable to the sponsoring organization. For a list of upcoming events and seminars, click [here](#) - or contact us to customize one for your organization.

Need a Presenter for Your Next Meeting or Conference?



Are you looking for an eye-opening, inspiring presentation for your next event? If your organization, company or association is searching for something different - a content-packed, entertaining, how-to customized seminar on how to manage the media - then we should talk. Don't just take our word for it - see [where we've talked before](#) and [what other people say](#) about our seminars.



Managing the Media: Lawyers & The Press CLE

As almost any general counsel of a large, publicly traded, consumer-oriented company will tell you, legal controversies today are tried in the Court of Public Opinion -- at least as much as in any Court of Law. Every organization, especially large, publicly-traded corporations, has much to gain (or lose) by the way a legal controversy is positioned in the media. Because the value of a company's reputation is immeasurable -- and perhaps its largest uninsured asset -- a corporation loses when the brand image is tarnished, even if the corporation technically wins at trial. Furthermore, since most legal controversies are settled prior to trial, the Court of Public Opinion has arguably become the most important battleground affecting not only good will and market share, but legal bargaining power and settlement negotiations. Managing this battleground, therefore, has become integral to many corporations' legal strategies.

Georgetown Journal of Legal Ethics, Vol. 22, 2009

For more information about presentations and training for attorneys and their clients, please click [here](#).



Crisis/Media Training & Coaching

Your organization is in trouble...your CFO has been arrested...the company truck was in an accident...hackers hijacked your database...the pressure is on...the camera crew is at the door....

Do you know how to handle a high-pressure TV interview? Will your messages survive the editing booth? Do you know where to put your hands? What to wear? Do you look at the camera - or at the interviewer?

It takes a lifetime to build a reputation and only a few seconds to destroy one. In a split second you could find yourself in a position where you need to know how to handle the media or be a public spokesperson. Would you know what to do or how to respond?

More important - do you have the necessary skill set to "manage the message" and advance the cause of your business, agency or nonprofit?

You can be certain the senior executives at virtually all of the Fortune 500 companies have been through media training, working with a media coach to learn how to handle adversarial situations with journalists and stakeholders. Perhaps it's time for you to learn this specialized set of survival skills?



We also offer spokesperson & presentation training and coaching, designed to improve your daily interactions with colleagues, employees, investors, journalists and other outside parties.

Call Bruce Hennes, Barb Paynter and the staff at [Hennes Paynter Communications](http://www.hennespaynter.com) today at 216-321-7774 and talk to us about media, spokesperson and presentation training and coaching for you, your top execs -- or anyone who might have to hold the fort down with a reporter until the appropriate spokesperson can be located. For more about our training services, click [here](#).

Ask us, too, about how we can help you create, implement and test a crisis communications plan. For more information about those services, click [here](#).



**When your organization or reputation is threatened, you need a specialist.
A crisis communications specialist.**



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Administrivia

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OUR FAVORITE QUOTE: You simply can't communicate your way out of a situation you've behaved your way into (credit to Don Etling at Fleishman-Hillard for this insight).

WARREN BUFFET'S 4-STEP CRISIS COMM STRATEGY: Get it right. Get it fast. Get it out. Get it over.



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