

# INSIGHT

GOFF PUBLIC Presents

## A CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS STORY

STRATEGY & PLANNING • MEDIA RELATIONS • MEDIA TRAINING • SOCIAL MEDIA • LOBBYING & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS  
**CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS** • GRASSROOTS & GRASSTOPS • COMMUNITY RELATIONS • INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS • EVENT PLANNING  
WRITING, EDITING & RESEARCH • DESIGN & PRODUCTION • PRESENTATIONS & SPEECHES • VIDEO PRODUCTION

**GP**

WWW.GOFFPUBLIC.COM

651-292-8062



COMING TO AUDIENCES AUGUST 2011

# CRISIS PREPAREDNESS:

## Your Reputation Insurance Policy

**W**hen a crisis strikes, a hundred things need to be done at once. The media is calling or is already on site, neighbors are wondering what's happening, public officials want to know what to tell their constituents, and regulators are asking what happened and how it will be fixed. Not to mention, you need to physically respond to what has happened – whether it's a natural disaster, public health crisis, or other serious event.

The best way to handle a crisis is to plan for it before it happens. The people at Goff Public are experts at developing strategic crisis plans and helping you practice your response in advance – so that your team is prepared and your communications process is solid.

We can also help you with public relations and public affairs efforts during and after the crisis. Think of us as your reputation insurance policy.

*"The Mille Lacs Band has to be prepared for an emergency to occur on any given day. For instance, when suspected cases of H1N1 hit the reservation two years ago, we were able to communicate quickly and effectively with Goff Public's help and expertise."*

**Jamie Edwards**, director of government affairs and public information officer, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe

## Before the Crisis Hits

Once a crisis occurs, there is only time for action. That is why advance planning and preparing are so critical.

These are some important steps to help you get ready for the unexpected:

- Build and maintain relationships and trust with neighbors, local civic and political leaders, regulators, and other key audiences. You will need to work and communicate with these people during a crisis.
- Develop a strategic crisis plan as a team. The plan should:
  - Designate public information officers (PIOs) and spokespeople.
  - Assign well-defined roles and protocols to address leadership, legal aspects, logistics, emergency response, and communications (incoming calls, media and social media monitoring, etc.).
  - Provide general key messages about your organization and its crisis preparedness.
  - Contain up-to-date lists of media contacts and key public officials.
- Hold mock crisis drills to identify gaps in the plan, then fill those gaps.
  - Revisit the plan regularly (at least annually), so that changes like employee turnover and technology improvements aren't factors when a crisis strikes.
  - Seek media training for your PIOs and spokespeople, so that they are ready for press conferences and media interviews.



*"An organization will be measured as much – or even more – on its response to the emergency as on the emergency itself."*

**Chris Georgacas**, president, Goff Public

*"Goff Public has helped many clients develop and implement crisis plans. Our goal is to help clients respond so well to a crisis that the public feels reassured, even during a difficult time."*

**Heidi Larson**, principal and chief financial officer, Goff Public



## A Blockbuster Response

A crisis plan helps you to be more confident and effective when the moment comes to react. Then your focus can shift to implementing the plan.

- Develop incident-specific key messages that communicate your compassion and commitment to addressing the problem quickly and effectively.
- Maintain a crisis team record of what you are doing. You may need to refer to it in the days ahead, and it will help you assess your efforts after the crisis has passed.
- Communicate regularly with your key audiences. Be forthcoming, honest and empathetic while not compromising your efforts.
- Evaluate your crisis response as soon as possible once the crisis has ended. This will help you update your crisis plan based on what you learned.

## An Experienced Cast

Crisis communications is one of Goff Public's specialties. It requires an experienced team of experts and a high level of client knowledge and confidentiality. Goff Public has assisted clients with crises related to public health, public safety, the environment, natural disasters, crowd control, personnel, and finance. When you turn to us for crisis planning and carrying out that plan, you can trust that our team is the best at what we do.



*"Polaris has an extensive crisis communications plan to protect our company, employees, customers, and the communities where we do business. That plan was critical as we helped fight flooding in Roseau, where we helped safeguard our manufacturing facility and local infrastructure."*

**Marlys Knutson**, external relations manager, Polaris Industries



255 East Kellogg Blvd.  
Suite 102  
Saint Paul, MN 55101

651-292-8062  
www.goffpublic.com



## Favorite Movie Crises



"*Thirteen Days*, starring Kevin Costner, which shows how close we came to World War III after President Kennedy discovered the Soviet Union had installed nuclear missiles in Cuba." **Heidi Larson**



"*Twister*. I grew up loving thunderstorms and even tornadoes. I saw the movie twice in the theater, and both times I walked out to the sirens blaring due to severe weather!" **Jodi Saari**



"*State of Play*, starring Russell Crowe and Ben Affleck. It follows a journalist's investigation into the suspicious death of a woman who turns out to be a Congressman's mistress." **Chris Duffy**



"*The King's Speech*, based on the true story of England's King George VI, whose speech impediment made him reluctant to assume the throne in 1937. The King must overcome this personal struggle before he can lead England through its larger crisis, World War II." **Ginger Wassman**



"*Finding Nemo*, in which a clown fish named Marlin travels the open ocean in search of his son, Nemo, who was stolen from his coral reef home." **Sara Thatcher**



"*The Insider*, in which Russell Crowe plays a tobacco company whistle-blower who was interviewed by *60 Minutes*." **Tricia Nissen**