

What you can learn from the Oxfam and Haiti Crisis

Apologise and take responsibility quickly:

Take an honest and apologetic approach, and ensure that you highlight your plans moving forward to try and stop this from ever happening again. Make sure that you and your team are ready and prepared to respond asap.

Keep your response in proportion and keep communicating:

Provide multiple resources and equip your social media team with the tools and answers to any questions but make sure that you keep up to date with everyday enquiries at the same time.

Consider using our CAP formula when drafting your responses:

C CARE	Begin your statement with empathy. Show you care for the people affected by the crisis.
A CTION	Tell people exactly what you are doing to fix the problem. Rather than broad statements such as 'we're doing everything possible', look for specific actions you are taking.
P ERSPECTIVE	Finish by putting the issue into some perspective or context. I.e. Address how rare the incident is, that you have a good record, that the issue is brand new and couldn't be predicted or is only affecting a small area.

Brief everyone in your team:

It is important that everyone on your team knows how to respond in order to stop anyone from giving damaging opinions in interviews or on social media. One persons differing opinion can have a large effect on the escalation of the crisis.

Embed your response in your organisation's culture:

Ensure that learnings from your crisis are embedded in the way your organisation works in the future and inform the public of this too. It is good that they know you're taking action.

Don't try to erase history and make it easy for people to find out about your response:

Make sure your website or online presence is up to date and portraying yourselves in the best possible way. Include factual and reliable information that people can read before they delve into media articles.

The way that Oxfam responded was certainly not perfect, but it is an important event to learn from. It highlights that an honest approach and an active online presence can have a huge effect in the escalation of a crisis.

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