

Strategic Communication Case Study Analysis

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**Abstract**

A Case Study is an in-depth study of a person, class, or place. “In a case study, nearly every aspect of the subject's life and history is analyzed to seek patterns and causes of behavior. The hope is that learning gained from studying one case can be generalized to many others. Unfortunately, case studies tend to be highly subjective and it is sometimes difficult to generalize results to a larger population. (Cherry, 2021)”

Communication tactics are techniques that could be useful to find your strategy. “Tactics are the tools you use to pursue the objectives associated with your strategy. Tactics include both communications channels like email, PR and social media, as well as specific types of content like storytelling or infographics. (Miller, 2019)”

**Organization**

The organization develops the main purpose in Public Relations. “Public relations should have a purpose, and this purpose should provide value for an organization. When public relations are not linked to the mission of an organization, public relations practitioners are often caught up in the production of meaningless work. (Swann, 2014)”

Researchers reviewed the SWOT analysis on the organizational systems. “SWOT Analysis (short for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) is a business strategy tool to assess how an organization compares to its competition. ‘Strengths’ and ‘weaknesses’ are internally-related. The former representing a facet of an organization/entity which lends it an advantage over the competition. The latter being characteristic of that same entity, which leads to a relative disadvantage against the competition. Regarding externally-related, ‘opportunities’ are realities in the greater environment that can be exploited to benefit the entity. While on the other hand,

‘threats’ are realities in the greater environment, which might lead to problems for the entity. (NCBI, 2021)”

Readers observed the important role of the vision statement in organizational systems. “A vision statement is a statement of an organization’s overarching aspirations of what it hopes to achieve or to become. The vision statement does not provide specific targets. It is a visual image of what the organization is trying to produce or become. It should inspire people and motivate them to want to be part of and contribute to the organization.

Readers studied the progression of the mission statements in the organization system. “The mission statement describes what the organization needs to do now to achieve the vision. The vision and mission statements must support each other, but the mission statement is more specific. The mission statement conveys to stakeholders why the organization exists. It explains how it creates value for the market or the larger community. (Cox, 2020)”

Strategic goals participate in the mission statements. “The mission statement leads to strategic goals. Strategic goals are the broad goals the organization will try to achieve. By describing why the organization exists, and where and how it will compete, the mission statement allows leaders to define a coherent set of goals that fit together to support the mission. (Cox, 2020)”

Readers understand the development of the vision statements in the organization systems. “The values statement, also called the code of ethics, differs from both the vision and mission statements. The values statement defines what the organization believes in and how people in the organization are expected to behave—with each other, with customers and suppliers, and with other stakeholders. It provides a moral direction for the organization that guides decision-making

and establishes a standard for assessing actions. It also provides a standard for employees to judge violations. (Cox, 2020)”

Organization issues could lead to a serious situation in working for some companies. “Organizational issues can be a challenge for some companies to overcome as they try to improve and manage their daily operations. The first step to resolving organizational issues is to acknowledge that there is a problem and identify the source. It takes time to determine where issues are coming from and create the appropriate solutions for each problem, but this is a necessary step for any organization that wants to grow and thrive in a healthy manner. (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021)”

Management supports and observes the communication strategy. “The complexity of communication strategy is understood in democratic societies that encourage open and liberal debate of virtually any topic. In the U.S., the First Amendment protects the right of organizations and individuals to freely express themselves in most situations. Citizens are free to criticize organizations, their products or services, and their leaders. (Swann, 2014)” Marketing concentrates on the development of organizations. “Marketing focuses on increasing customers and sales for an organization’s product or service. Marketing is also concerned with ensuring the product or service is designed to meet customer needs, is attractively packaged, is distributed effectively, and satisfies customers. Marketing professionals conduct research to find out what type of products consumers want and at what cost. (Swann, 2014)”

Marketing is a great technique for communication. “Marketing’s use of communication to raise awareness and create effective messages is another area that overlaps with public relations. Marketing’s messages can be informative and persuasive--to build excitement and desire for a product or service. Advertising created for a public relations campaign may also have specific

tasks, such as introducing new college degree programs or inviting people to an open house. (Swann, 2014)”

Identifying and solving the strategy is both influential to your employees and the organization. “Identifying and resolving organizational issues is highly beneficial to both the organization and its employees. The quicker you can resolve organizational issues, the sooner you can create a healthier workspace and focus your energy and resources on other business matters. Having good organizational practices promotes a sense of accomplishment and achievement within the company. Organizational improvements can also serve as motivation for an organization to keep pushing for new solutions or make proactive changes to avoid the same issues in the future. (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021)”

### **Problem or Opportunity**

Public Relations addressed two issues that lead to a consideration between the problem and opportunity. “The complete changing nature of the media business is our biggest opportunity. Whether it’s MySpace or YouTube, which have now become media outlets, or the death of the traditional advertising model, PR agencies have a huge unique opportunity at this time to fill that gap. I expect PR will continue to grow tremendously quickly. Our biggest challenge is the lack of talent—smart, focused strategic counselors are at a premium, and more talent is needed in this industry. We need better folks representing us throughout the industry. (Carufel, 2018)”

### **RACE**

RACE is the concept of case study. “RACE stands for Recognize, Assess, Control, and Evaluate. It is a common process adopted by an organization to deal with workplace hazards. An organization should first *recognize* the hazard. Next, it should *assess* the potential exposure of the

workers to the hazard. At this stage, the organization will be in a good position to *control* the hazard. After implementing the control processes, the organization should evaluate its efficacy in terms of hazard control or elimination. (Yellapantula, 2017)”

### **Key Public**

Key Public is the majority group of people in the marketing plan. “Are segmented groups of people whose support and cooperation are considered "key" to the long-term survival of an organization or the short-term accomplishments of its objectives. So when a company goes to develop their marketing plan they must determine what demographic they are going to reach. (Storm, 2012)”

The key message is the information of the case study. “Key messages are the main points of information you want your audience to hear, understand, and remember. They are bite-sized summations that articulate what you do, why you do it, how you are different, and what value you bring to stakeholders. (Pollard, 2016)”

### **The Strategies of Public Relations**

Public Relations impacts the case study. “Public relations is about sending the right messages to the right place and the right people, creating a stronger brand reputation. PR agencies work alongside their clients to help them achieve this and promote them within their clients industries. PR is an area that can transform the future and profitability of a business. (5WPR, 2021)”

Internal Public plays an important role in the public relations. “Internal Public Relations in perspective refers to those who work and have a role in an organization such as employees,

management and their family members. In addition also refers to the union that lives and thrives in a company or organization. (Gani, 2016)

Eternal Public is the progression of public relations. “The main aim of the external PR team is to maintain a positive reputation and brand image for their company or organisation. They do this by proactively responding to media inquiries, coordinating and facilitating interviews and developing press releases to distribute relevant information. (Hurley, 2020)”

Public relations is useful and supportive in the organization systems. “Public relations helps organizations participate strategically in the ‘marketplace of ideas,’ so that viewpoints important to the organization are present in public debates that could affect an organization including debates that aid the promotion of products and services. (Swann, 2014)”

Public Relations’ strategies are helpful for your company and organization. “A PR strategy is used to help your business organize its public relations (or media relations) activities and make strategic decisions about the best way to communicate with its target audience. (Presspage, 2020)”

### **News Coverage**

Mainstream media news plays an important role in case study. “The news media are those elements of the mass media that focus on delivering news to the general public or a target public. By covering news, politics, weather, sports, entertainment, and vital events, the daily media shape the dominant cultural, social and political picture of society. Beyond the media networks, independent news sources have evolved to report on events which escape attention or underlie the major stories. (Science Daily, 2021)

#### **Twenty Years Later: The Legacy of 9/11 Media Coverage**

Journalists wanted to create a story to use the media coverage as a strategy to create a story of 9/11. “Across the nation, the aftermath of 9/11 instilled in communities a need for information,

truth and ultimately, a reason why. And, for many, the search for answers began with the media, leaving journalists responsible for deciding which stories to tell and how to tell them. (Walker, 2021)”

Researchers became determined to search for answers. “The turn of the 21st century ushered rapid technological development into the American media landscape. In journalism, technological growth was reflected in how the public consumed its news: split between print and digital media. Instead, with television, radio, print news and the up-and-coming internet, the United States sat at the precipice of an uncontested digital age.(Walker, 2021)”

Researchers found the nationalizing narratives of 9/11. “Recently, scrutiny over the media has grown in the general American consciousness, and the public has begun to reexamine whether journalism can ever be devoid of subjectivity. But Millette did not grow up with this critical rhetoric. Within her community, ideological and social conservatism made for a culture resistant to ideas and influences from elsewhere in the country, and Millette largely took media narratives at face value. (Walker, 2021)”

COVID-19 made a media coverage of 9/11. “In some ways, media coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic mirrors coverage of 9/11, showing consistencies in the way Americans interpret and experience tragedies. In the aftermath of 9/11, there was an honoring of first responders as American heroes akin to how doctors and healthcare professionals have been uplifted throughout the pandemic. (Walker, 2021)”

Racism and violence became a strong impact in the media coverage of 9/11. “In other ways, the media during both events have featured a rhetoric of ‘othering’ immigrants and religious and racial minorities, covering narratives that depict marginalized groups as responsible for



national tragedies. The period following 9/11 saw a rise in Islamophobic violence, and violence against East Asians spiked during the pandemic. (Walker, 2021)”

## **Cultural Considerations**

### **Quran Burning: Cultural Insensitivity Leads to Deaths and Multiple Apologies**

#### Questions for Discussion

1. What is culture?

Culture develops in different definitions within a social group in many generations on their daily lives. “Culture is a system of shared meanings within a social group that can develop over generations. Culture reflects how people their lives or how things are done; it includes shared experiences and activities, such as language, religion, dress, food, and the environment, as well as the common history and government that bind a group, region, or country together into a distinct social system. (Swann, 2014)

2. Why was cultural sensitivity important for the U.S. military forces in Afghanistan?

Cultural sensitivity plays an important role for the U.S. military forces in Afghanistan. “Remote, rugged, and deeply religious, Afghanistan is a mostly tribal and conservative nation whose fiercely independent citizens have shown themselves willing to fight for their freedom. The war in Afghanistan began in October 2001, one month after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 that killed nearly 3,000 persons. Operation Enduring Freedom, as it was named, was launched by the U.S., with the help of the United Kingdom, Australia, and the Afghan United Front. The operation’s goals were to defeat and dismantle al-Qaeda, the terrorist organization responsible for the U.S. attacks, and remove from power the Taliban, the extremist Islamist militant group that ruled Afghanistan and gave safe haven to al-Qaeda. (Swann, 2014)”

3. How did the Army prepare soldiers culturally who were deploying to Afghanistan?

The Army prepare soldiers culturally who were deploying to Afghanistan through their training in three organizational groups. “The majority of U.S. Army cultural training for soldiers deploying to Afghanistan and other countries involved three groups: the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), the Army’s Training and Doctrine Command’s (TRADOC’s), Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL), and the U.S. Forces Command (FORSCOM). (Swann, 2014)”

Three organizational groups created the idea of cultural training “Briefly, CENTCOM oversees all branches of the military in a theater-level operation. Among its activities, it identifies and requests training needs for active and deployed troops. TRADOC’s culture center develops and provides educational resources for troop training. FORSCOM also provides more tailored troop training based on ever-evolving needs in conflict zones. Its readiness training includes specific training scenarios with complex cross-cultural challenges. One training center has an urban combat landscape with many role players acting as combatants and civilians. (Swann, 2014)”

4. What are some of the cultural difference between Afghanistan and the United States?

The culture of Afghanistan is considered an Islamic religion. “Afghanistan is an Islamic republic, and more than 99 percent of its citizens are Muslims, followers of Islam. Muslims believe that there is only one true God, Allah and that none other should be worshiped. Muslims believe the Quran has survived to present times in its original form and is God’s final revelation to humanity. The Quran is considered holy and its handling requires respect by all, including non-believers. (Swann, 2014)”

Each individual religious object does not involve any controversies in the United States. “While many Americans revere religious objects, such as the Bible and the Torah, it is generally not illegal in the U.S. to destroy or mistreat them. Some artists, for example, have created and exhibited what religious conservatives consider blasphemous depictions of religious objects and themes, including *Piss Christ*, a plastic crucifix submerged in a glass of the artist’s urine; and *The Holy Virgin Mary*, a painting that contained sexual images and elephant dung. These and other art objects have sparked protests in America. (Swann, 2014)”

5. What are the issues surrounding the handling of Islamic materials such as the Quran?

John Paul Boyce, a deputy chief in the U.S. Army Forces explained several issues for participants to learn to handle the Islamic materials in the cultural training to prepare for the Afghanistan War.

They could not handle the verbal disrespect. “Verbal disrespect for Islam and/or the Quran is considered as inappropriate as physical desecration of the Quran. Insulting the Quran is an act of blasphemy. Expect to encounter copy of the Quran or other Islamic Religious Materials when you search a person’s belongings or home. Ask the person or homeowner to remove the sacred text or place it in a secure location before conducting a search. (Swann, 2014)”

They could not handle the Quran in the Arabic language. “Non-muslims should NEVER handle an Arabic version of the Quran. While non-Muslims are permitted to handle a translation of the Quran, one should make it a general practice to treat all religious materials with extraordinary respect. If in the performance of your duty, you are required to handle a Quran or other Islamic Religious Material, you should use a clean cloth or clean gloves. It is important to recognize that

even partial copies or hand-written verses of the Quran are equally sacred and must be handled in the same manner. (Swann, 2014)”

They need to use proper procedures to deal with the Islamic Religious Materials.

“Remember when securing items that you must still use proper procedures when handling Islamic Religious Materials, even if you are not certain of the exact nature of the materials you are discovered. Proper handling ensures no offense will be given should these materials be deemed sacred in nature. (Swann, 2014)”

Additionally, “Troops at training centers at Fort Irwin, California, or at Fort Polk, Louisiana, also received training with numerous scenarios including one about the handling of the Quran. (Swann, 2014)”

6. How did the U.S. forces respond to the Quran burning incident initially? Was it effective?

The U.S forces respond to the Quran burning initially which became effective. “The first response came within hours of the Quran burning incident. General John R. Allen, commander of ISAF; issued the following statement in a print and video release format February 21, 2012: *To the noble people of Afghanistan- I have ordered an investigation into a report I received during the night that ISAF personnel at Bagram Airbase improperly disposed of a large number of Islamic religious materials which included Korans. When we learned of these actions, we immediately intervened and stopped them. The materials recovered will be properly handled by appropriate religious authorities. We are thoroughly investigating the incident and we are taking steps to ensure this does not ever happen again. I assure you... I promise you... this was NOT intentional in any way.* (Swann, 2014)”

7. What rhetorical tactics were used within the apologies to express sincerity?

The rhetorical situations were used within the apologies to express sincerity. “General John Allen, Commander of ISAF, apologized to the Afghan people and said that an investigation had been launched and would include Afghans, and that he had ordered that all military under his command would be required to receive training in how to handle Islamic religious material to prevent the situation from happening. (Swann, 2014)”

General Allen provided an apology. “*I offer my sincere apologies for any offense this may have caused, to the President of Afghanistan, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and most importantly, to the noble people of Afghanistan.* (Swann, 2014)”

8. Beyond rhetorical tactics, what actions were taken during the crisis?

There were several actions that were taken during the crisis that General Allen and Secretary of Defense Leon E. Penetta to address the issue. “*He and I apologize to the Afghan people and disapprove of such conduct in the strongest possible terms. These actions do not represent the views of the United States military. We honor and respect the religious practices of the Afghan people, without exception. I support Gen. Allen’s swift and decisive action to investigate this matter jointly with the Afghan government. I will carefully review the final results of the investigation to ensure that we take all steps necessary and appropriate so that this never happens again.* (Swann, 2014)”

A News Release reported about the new information on the investigation of the Quran Burning and military training purposes. “A news release issued by ISAF for the first of three investigations was issued February 21, 2012; it included the requirement for new training.

Soldiers' mandatory pre-deployment language/culture training did not provide specifics on how to handle religious materials. Instead, the training provided a short overview of Islam that included a brief mention of the Quran. (Swann, 2014)"

9. Why did Barack Obama issue an apology?

President Barack Obama addressed the apology due to the public information of Quran Burning in Afghanistan. "President Barack Obama issued an apology in a hand-delivered letter by U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker to Afghan President Hamid Karzai on February 23, 2012. The letter's complete contents were made public because it included other information. (Swann, 2014)"

10. What are some of the more innovative training initiatives underway to improve the cultural sensitivity of soldiers in combat zones?

The investigations found more innovative training initiatives underway to improve the cultural sensitivity of soldiers in combat zones. "FORSCOM pre-employment training for soldiers now includes the following reminder regarding the 'Disposal of Islamic Religious Material': *The proper disposal of Islamic Religious Materials SHOULD Not be performed by US personnel. Only unusable/damaged/worn-out Qurans should be disposed of-with proper procedures. Only Muslims should dispose of Qurans and/or other Islamic Religious Materials. Methods include: wrapping the Quran in a pure cloth and burying it in a grave or fastening the Quran with a heavy object like a stone and placing it respectfully in flowing water.* (Swann, 2014)"

Big Deeper

The United States (U.S.) Military understand the mission of language and culture in other foreign countries. "The U.S. military has published many documents discussing the need for

language and cultural understanding for its missions in other countries. ‘Proper Handling-Disposal of Islamic Religious Materials-Training Material-CDR-526’ that Army personnel stationed in Islamic countries now receive as a result of the Quran burning controversy. (Swann, 2014)”

### **Stakeholder**

Stakeholders play an important role in an organization. “People who are affected in some way by the decisions of an organization are called stakeholders. They can include employees, neighbors, shareholders, consumer advocates, the media or government; they can be people with no formal tie to the organization other than an interest in it and/or its products or services. (Swann, 2014)”

Stakeholders set all the groups of interest in the company. “Company stakeholders and their interests must be considered when identifying the organizational structure and procedures of a business. A stakeholder is any individual or investor group that has an interest in the success of a business. Company stakeholders are often interested in the outcome of a company because they are invested in it in some way. However, stakeholders may have varying interests, making it difficult for a business to satisfy each one. It is possible to have many different stakeholders, all with different interests in the business. (Upcounsel, 2021)”

There are four attitudes in stakeholders. “The Stakeholder attitudes could broadly be grouped into the following categories: *Champion*- Active advocate for the project/initiative, *Supporter* - Supports the project/initiative, *Neutral* - No views for or against the initiative, *Critic* - Does not oppose the initiative actively, and *Opponent* - Aims to disrupt the initiative. (Spendlove and Swargam, 2017)”

Researchers reviewed the behavior and attributes of stakeholders. “Empirical studies suggest that three stakeholder attributes (power, urgency, and proximity), and four types of stakeholder behaviors (cooperative potential, competitive threat, opposite position, and neutral attitude) are perceived by the practitioners as important to dealing with stakeholder claims. Depending on stakeholders' salience levels and behavior types, strategies of defense, compromise, or concession/adaptation are chosen and applied by project managers in practice. (Sage Journals, 2014)”

### **Critical Thinking**

Case study guides students through learning experiences. “Case studies also increased overall student perceptions of learning gains and perceptions of learning gains specifically related to written and oral communication skills and the ability to grasp connections between scientific topics and their real-world applications. (Bonney, 2015)”

### **Conclusion**

Case study is to reflect on the research in three ways: person, place, and a thing. It impacts students to have learning experiences. Communication tactics could lead to a supportive role in your marketing plan. Organizations create an idea in public relations. It involves the information of SWOT in the organization systems. It explains the background details of the organization systems through visions, missions, and values. It faced three situations: issues, opportunity, and challenge. The strategy of Public Relations became a huge influence in your career and your company. Key publics and key messages focus on the group of people and the major points of information in the marketing plan. The circumstances of Stakeholders faced three issues: attitudes, interests, and



behaviors. RACE is useful in case study in four ways to be successful in your workplace especially as you participate in the communication and mass media industry. Media coverage provides the target audience with information about the news media. Cultural and other considerations have impacted the mainstream media of 9/11.

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