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REPUTATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

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Crisis Communication Plan, Part 2: Reputation Management Strategies

V. Employee Media Policy

a. Spokesperson Authorization & Personal Social Media Protocols

During a crisis, maintaining message consistency and operational accuracy is vital to protecting the organization's reputation.

- **Authorized Spokespersons:** Only designated members of the Crisis Communication Team—specifically the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), the designated Director of Public Relations, and appointed legal counsel—are permitted to speak, write, or officially comment on behalf of the organization to the media or external stakeholders.
- **Non-Authorized Employees & Procedures:** All other employees are strictly **not** allowed to speak to the media or issue unauthorized statements regarding an ongoing crisis. If an employee is approached directly by a member of the media, reporters, or curious members of the general public (whether in person, via phone, or through email), they must follow these standardized steps:

1. **Do not speculate, offer personal opinions, or say "no comment."**
2. Politely decline to answer by stating: *"I am not authorized to speak on behalf of the company regarding this matter. Let me direct you to our official communications department."*
3. Immediately forward the reporter's contact details, media outlet name, and inquiry specifics to the Crisis Communication Team.

- **Personal Social Media Policy:** Employees are strictly prohibited from posting, sharing, speculating, or commenting on their personal social media accounts about the company's business operations, internal matters, or any crisis situation. Personal accounts must not be used to leak internal information, upload unauthorized

photos/videos from company property during an incident, or engage with online critics regarding corporate matters. Violating this policy jeopardizes public trust and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

b. Employee Training and Expectations Alignment

To ensure total compliance, the Employee Media Policy will be integrated into regular operational protocols through a multi-tiered training program:

- **Onboarding & Annual Reviews:** All staff members will review and sign the Employee Media Policy during annual compliance updates.
- **Informational Briefings:** Department heads will conduct 15-minute alignment briefings to walk staff through real-world scenarios, ensuring every individual understands their explicit status (i.e., that they are non-spokespersons) and knows the exact referral script to use.
- **Digital Access:** The media policy, key contact routing charts, and standard response scripts will be hosted permanently on the internal employee portal for instant reference.

VI. Messaging

Proactively preparing messaging frameworks ensures the organization can respond swiftly with transparency, empathy, and accountability. Below is the core holding and press statement template designed for deployment across press releases, website updates, and press conferences:

Official Media Statement / Press Release Template

"We are deeply aware of the situation currently unfolding regarding [insert brief description of the crisis/issue], and our highest priority right now is the safety, well-being, and trust of our community, clients, and team members.

As soon as we became aware of the issue, our leadership team mobilized immediately, activating our comprehensive Crisis Communication Plan and cooperating fully with relevant local, state, and federal authorities to determine the exact facts. We are committed to complete transparency and will share verified updates

as they become available through our official website and media channels.

We recognize the gravity of this situation and take full responsibility for addressing it head-on. We appreciate the patience and support of our stakeholders as we work diligently to resolve this matter and implement corrective measures to ensure it never happens again."

VII. Social Media Management

Digital platforms act as the frontline for both public scrutiny and rapid information dissemination during an emergency. The organization will actively monitor and utilize specific digital channels while enforcing strict command-and-control workflows.

Platform Utilization & Primary Responsibilities

The Crisis Communication Committee designates specific leads for monitoring and communication functions to eliminate duplicate messaging or response delays:

- **Primary Channels:** The organization's official profiles on X (formerly Twitter) and LinkedIn will serve as the primary conduits for public updates, while corporate website banners will host detailed, timestamped press releases.
- **Designated Committee Leads:**
 - **a. Monitoring Lead (Primary Responsibility):** Assigned to the **Public Relations Specialist**, who is tasked with tracking real-time sentiment, brand mentions, comment sections, and emerging rumors across social platforms.
 - **b. Communication Lead (Primary Responsibility):** Assigned to the **Communications Director**, who holds sole authority to draft, clear through legal/management, and push out approved response copy across public-facing channels.

Assessment Process: USAF Response Assessment Framework

To systematically evaluate the gravity of online discussions and structure our response, the committee will utilize the **USAF Response Assessment** process. This assessment evaluates incoming digital intelligence via a step-by-step framework:

1. **Situation Evaluation:** Determine if the online chatter meets the predetermined criteria of a crisis requiring an active digital response (evaluating what is known, who is affected, and why they need to know).
2. **Operational Pause:** Instantly halt all scheduled, automated marketing and promotional posts across all corporate social channels to prevent tone-deaf messaging.
3. **Sentiment & Risk Analysis:** Categorize public discourse volume, identify the spread of misinformation, and gauge stakeholder emotional temperature.
4. **Targeted Execution:** Deploy pre-approved, precise messaging through the appropriate channel, followed by continuous monitoring to evaluate how the public receives and reacts to the update.

Follow-Up Question:

Would you like to tailor any specific scenario placeholders in the messaging section above to reflect your capstone client's exact industry or type of potential crisis?