



CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Theoretical Perspectives and Dynamics of a Complex Concept

ANA MATÍAS ¹, LUÍS CARDOSO ²

¹ Polytechnic of Viseu and Centre for Studies in Innovation and Education (CI&DEI), Portugal

² Polytechnic Institute of Portalegre and Centre for Comparative Studies / University of Lisbon, Portugal

KEYWORDS

Crisis
Crisis management
Strategic communication
Crisis communication
Organizations

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the evolution of the concept of crisis within the organizational scope, and the responses that can be given by crisis communication. Our objectives include a historical approach to organizational management, that has recognized the importance of having a plan to face crisis and communicate effectively with the stakeholders. The concept of crisis has changed how organizations respond internally and externally. We conclude that organizations can react with a structured plan to unexpected situations, combining crisis management principles with accurate and targeted communication.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Crisis
Gestión de crisis
Comunicación estratégica
Comunicación de crisis
Organizaciones

RESUMEN

Este artículo analiza la evolución del concepto de crisis en el contexto organizacional, y las respuestas que puede dar la comunicación de crisis. Se hace un enfoque histórico de la gestión, que reconoció la importancia de tener un plan para enfrentar las crisis y comunicarse de manera efectiva con las partes interesadas. El concepto de crisis ha cambiado la forma cómo las organizaciones responden interna y externamente, en un esfuerzo por adaptar el mensaje a los medios y audiencias. Concluimos que las organizaciones pueden reaccionar con un plan estructurado ante situaciones inesperadas, combinando los principios de gestión de crisis con una comunicación precisa y dirigida.

Recibido: 07/ 10 / 2022

Aceptado: 11/ 12 / 2022

1. Introduction

In the 21st century, the evolution that organizations know at the structural and technological level is paralleled by the changes felt in consumers and in public opinion, which become progressively more selective, informed and enlightened. Faced with these behavioral and conceptual changes in human beings, organizations have come to understand that good corporate image management constitutes an opportunity for promotion and dissemination that becomes a competitive advantage (Sallam, 2016; Putra & Yasa, 2017). For this reason, Lampreia (2007) underlines that the concern to project a prestigious image, whether of their company or themselves, has become a constant in the daily lives of modern managers. And Lopes (2000, p. 2) reinforces: "in the 60s and 70s, the attitude of companies was to omit facts that were difficult to explain from public opinion". At that time, on the one hand, "communication was far from being understood as a strategic management instrument and, on the other hand, journalists also did not have goodwill with private companies", with the publication of news involving the activities of companies being rare." This scenario changed at the same speed with which profound political and economic changes took place. Ideological openness, and especially the opening of markets (with the consequent increase in competition) were decisive for changing the mental structure of managers, which made communication come to be seen as an essential factor in the business world. According to Norsa (2009), until the 70s of the 20th centuries, the concept of crisis management (modern understood) did not exist, and as such this topic was not studied in business or administration courses. For the author, the development of this discipline seems to have been determined by the occurrence of two situations with great impact, namely: the accident at the Three Miles Island nuclear power plant, on March 28, 1979, and the poisoning, with cyanide, of some packaging of Tylenol (the current market leading pain reliever in the United States of America, produced by Johnson & Johnson), in September 1982. In the same line of thought, Lampreia (1998, p. 69) points out that it was "large-scale disasters such as Bhopal (1984), Seveso (1976) or Chernobyl (1986)" that "brought to the fore the need governments, institutions and companies are prepared to deal with crisis situations".

Norsa (2009) complements when he states that crisis management was born with the aim of finding solutions and answers to deal in the most appropriate way possible with the numerous risk situations that can be put to any company or institution. In the analysis of Lopes (2000), the modern view of management that sees communication as a strategic instrument at the service of business results is relatively recent in countries that have lived through dictatorships, but it is something that has long been used in countries where the open market is a tradition. Deep down, the most developed countries were quick to realize that communication could add value to products and services. Unlike other times, nowadays companies must pay attention and show concern about social problems, human rights and environmental preservation, since these problems increasingly influence the markets in which they operate. Organizations therefore increasingly face new challenges in terms of communication, since public opinion reveals a greater knowledge of these aspects and is interventionist in order to penalize offenders (Holtzhausen & Zerfass, 2015; Mahoney, 2021).

As a result of the global conjuncture in the post-pandemic context, the literature on crises has multiplied in recent times. "Crisis management is a discipline that aims, through organizational procedures, to reduce the effects of crisis phenomena that affect organizations, and to act proactively on the risks inherent to organizational activities and which can become causes of these effects" (Mendes & Pereira, 2006, pp. 30-31). Crisis management therefore concerns the control of real and potential risks, the development of organizational skills to face these same risks, the response to phenomena that, despite prevention, affect the institutional balance and the learning that ideally should result from the transposition of the moment of crisis. Maia (2016) states that contingency management aims to predict all the actions that organizations need to take in the event of a calamity.

Crisis management can be divided into two components: the technical-operational aspect and the symbolic-communicational aspect. The first concerns operational management, safety and quality activities, with a direct or indirect association with the production process; the second concerns the construction, maintenance or reconstruction of institutional reputation, with regard to the relationship that the organization maintains with all its stakeholders (Mendes & Pereira, 2006, p. 31).

2. The modern concept of Crisis

The origin of the concept of crisis is very remote. If we focus on the history of the West, the concept comes to us in Ancient Greece: it was used by Thucydides in the Peloponnesian War, to mark the turning point in the battle, but also and naturally by Hippocrates, who anchored the term in medicine, to which he was linked almost exclusively for several centuries, and during which he appeared sporadically in connection with some reflections in the field of social sciences. From the 18th century and especially the 19th century, it began to support a multiplicity of theorizations and today, omnipresent, it emerges as a concept so vast that it becomes difficult to classify (Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018). The authors complement this reasoning when they state that the idea of crisis began to be generalized in the context of social analysis in the 17th and 18th centuries, a period in which the expression economic crisis appeared for the first time (Starn, 1976). However, it was already in the 19th century, with the progress of the social sciences, that the notion of crisis acquired greater prominence. Indeed, it is with Juglar

(1862) that the systematic recognition of economic cycles and crises begins, but it is Marx who for the first time proposes a theoretical approach, albeit diffuse and introductory, to these phenomena.

The definition of the modern concept of crisis is, therefore, not consensual, since each area of knowledge offers its own definition, and even within each discipline, the definitions present significant dissimilarities depending on their authors.

In economic theory, crises are defined in terms of inflation, unemployment, recession, for example (Rosier, 2001; Carvalho, 2021); in the field of political science, they can be attributed to errors in political leadership, the lack of ability to solve problems during governance (Habermas, 1976); for sociologists, crises translate social inequalities, disrespect for authority, or the decline of the family, for example. Psychologists consider that a crisis presupposes a rupture of the individual's identity due to different causes, while historians may see it as the result of too rapid technological advances, or the fragmentation of social life (Dafermos, 2022).

All this makes it possible to conclude that the concept of crisis is situational, however, it can be taken as a starting point that a crisis is any situation that runs the risk of increasing in intensity, interfering with the normal development of an activity, endangering the positive image enjoyed by an individual or an organization (Jaques, 2010; las & Gao, 2012; Crandall, Parnell & Spillan, 2013).

For Bastien this notion currently assumes an open and even ambiguous meaning, normally tending to designate a sudden, accidental and more or less transient rupture of harmonies and mechanical balances, to designate a breach of stability and a certain normality that common sense attributes to the various social objects (n.d., p. 1).

Additionally, Guth (1995) and Mucchielli (1993) analyzed crises as disruptions that affect the entirety of a system, harming its legitimacy and causing psychological repercussions on the organization's human resources; temporarily, the management of the organization is obliged to focus on aspects that will ultimately translate into the survival of the institution itself. Mucchielli (1993) thus defines a crisis as a moment of difficulty in the life of an organization, in which it loses its usual point of reference.

Even today, the contribution of Wiener & Kahn (1967) is unavoidable, who highlight as characteristic elements of a crisis the need to act under pressure, the threat to the established order and predetermined objectives, the decrease in control over events and increased tension between the organization and its stakeholders.

According to Beinstein (n.d.), a crisis can be defined as a major disturbance of a system, considered beyond its duration or geographical extension, and can endanger the existence of the referred system or its natural reconstruction mechanisms, even which, in other cases, allows it to recover, eliminate harmful components or behaviors, and incorporate regenerative innovations. In the first case, the crisis leads to decay and collapse; in the second, it leads to a more or less effective and lasting recomposition, often called a "growth crisis", typical of young social organisms or those with strong regenerative capacities.

The 60s of the 20th centuries were the time when the systematic study of crisis in an organizational context began. In 1963, and in the article "Some consequences of crisis which limit the viability of organizations", Charles Hermann dissects the consequences that some phenomena, called crises, had on the survival of organizations. For Hermann, "a crisis is something that threatens fundamental values of the organization, allows only a limited period of time for decision-making, threatens fundamental values of the organization, is unexpected (...) and originates in the relevant environment of the organization" (apud. Mendes & Pereira, 2006).

Seeking to bring together the aforementioned approaches in a body of doctrine, "we can assume that a crisis is a phenomenon that profoundly affects the development of an organization's normal activities, moving it away from the strategic vision and fundamental mission defined by its highest officials (...)" (ibid.).

Mikušová & Horváthová (2019) define a crisis as a situation that threatens the organization's objectives, alters the existing relationship between it and its audiences, and requires extraordinary intervention from those responsible to minimize or avoid possible negative consequences. This combination of factors gives the planning of crisis communication redoubled importance, translatable both in the preventive aspect and in terms of the effective resolution of the problem. In particular, relations with the media deserve special attention, since they are the main responsible for the loss of privacy of crises, which become public, seeing their negative effects on the organization's image amplified. On the other hand, the relationship with the media is important insofar as any institution needs them to be able to expose its view of the facts and thus communicate quickly and effectively with many of its audiences.

The crisis, as evidenced by Piñuel & Westphalen (2003), corresponds to a sudden change between two situations, a change that threatens the image and the natural balance of an organization. It is therefore characterized by an imbalance in the balance: it is a serious problem, linked to the daily functioning of the entire organization". They also point out that, in addition to already known endogenous characteristics, the crisis has a public and even media dimension: the media amplify the crisis, forcing the company to explain and justify itself in public. Precisely this media coverage can transform the crisis into a phenomenon of exceptional dimensions.

As stated by Mitroff, Pearson & Harrington (1996. p. 8), "A crisis can affect the existence of the organization as a whole, the main product line, a business unit or the like. A crisis can also damage, perhaps severely, an organization's financial performance. A crisis can still harm the health and well-being of consumers, employees,

the community in which it is inserted, and the environment itself.”

In summary, and as suggested by Bastien,

when not eroded by processes of emptying its content (...), the notion of crisis assumes an enormous heuristic value; (...) when referring to a moment of maximum tension, or even explosion, of structures, it has the power to reveal or, at least, to increase the visibility of structures and contradictions, which at other times are only latent or hidden. evidencing mechanisms and dynamisms hitherto unsuspected. (n.d., p. 9).

In certain circumstances, the crisis can be compared to an earthquake that substantially shakes the organism and causes lasting instability. It causes shock, general stress, multiplication of interventions and contradictions, which happens especially when it is the cause or consequence of conflicting interests or points of view. One of the most genuine difficulties of a crisis is discerning how likely it is to happen, but a prediction based on statistics can be established. We know that most crises are unexpected, which affects the ability to react, when it is imperative to take a battery of decisions very quickly, especially with regard to the communication strategy and the content of the messages to be disseminated (Sahin, Ulubeyli & Kazaza, 2015). The strategy for these crises must combine coherence with the institution’s communication philosophy and policy, in parallel with speed and efficiency. Among the characteristics that best define a crisis, we list the three that we consider to be structural: singularity, average impact and the ability to destabilize.

We see that, as Salinas reinforces,

the field of crisis management presents itself as multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and, not infrequently, counterdisciplinary, (...) reflect this dynamic. Even though they are designed to meet approaches from a specific point of view, they transcend the discipline that gives rise to them to dialogue with other areas of knowledge. (n.d., p. 2).

In the article “Pour une crisologie”, Morin (1976) presents a lapidary theorization of the concept of crisis. Comparing the antagonistic meanings of the term in its origins and contemporaneity, it ends up outlining exactly the field of study of organizational crises, their reason for being, and the possibilities of mitigating or preventing them. According to the author, “Krisis, in its origin, means decision: it is the decisive moment, in the evolution of an uncertain process, which allows the diagnosis. Today crisis means indecision. It is the moment when, concomitant with a disturbance, uncertainties arise” (idem, p. 149). In this order of ideas, it is possible to affirm that the crisis is part of a framework whose main feature is the escape from the standards and norms established as desirable for the perpetuation and growth of the organization, and the establishment of others unrelated to the stability scenario.

Coombs (2007, pp. 2-3) defines a crisis as “a perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectations of stakeholders and can seriously impact on organization’s performance and generate negative outcomes.”

For Beinstein,

A crisis could be defined as a major turmoil or disturbance of the social system considered beyond its duration and geographical extent, which can endanger its very existence, its essential mechanisms of reproduction, even if in other cases it allows to recover, get rid of harmful components and behaviors and incorporate saving solutions. In the first case, the crisis leads to decay and then collapse. In the second, to the more or less effective or durable recomposition, whether survival is difficult or rather as a ‘growth crisis’, typical of young social organisms or with available reserves and renewal. (n.d., p. 3)

From the perspective of Bundy *et al.* (2017, p. 1662), “An organizational crisis—an event perceived by managers and stakeholders as highly salient, unexpected, and potentially disruptive—can threaten an organization’s relationships and have profound implications for its with stakeholders”.

Pearson & Clair (1998) systematize around three different perspectives; a purely technical one that reports to the structural, technical and operative dynamics of a system, in which the phenomena are envisaged, based on the physical and technical variables that define them; another, subdivisible, in which the object of analysis is fixed a) in the human aspect associated with disruptive phenomena and b) in a pure psychological perspective, in which the analysis focuses on the analysis in the individualized explanation of the effects and consequences of the phenomena; finally, a socio-political perspective, where the crisis is seen as a collective breakdown of shared meaning and the structuring of social roles, and where there is a transformation (which can manifest itself in different degrees) in the social order, leadership, values, beliefs and social order commonly established.

Mendes conceptualizes:

We consider crisis a moment in which the meaning of a process is manifested and that requires that certain actions of choice, judgment, decision and interpretation are carried out so that the process can develop and clarify until the end and that the action to be carried out is one that allows the understanding and conclusion of the process. A crisis, then, indicates an ability to distinguish, judge, choose and decide in a

situation of conflict and contradiction inherent to human action. (1987, p. 2)

And he goes further:

A crisis is above all a perceptual phenomenon developed by third parties on an agent who sees himself/is involved in an unpredictable event or action, which has a destructive or disruptive potential on an installed and reference social system. For this reason, a crisis is a public reality that implies interpretation by third parties mediated by the media. Externally, a crisis is still a reality that translates into a breach of social expectations placed on the agent(s) that jeopardize their reputation and legitimacy and, consequently, their ability to continue to develop its activities and interventions as it had hitherto; internally, the crisis implies a complex judgment and decision-making process aimed at restoring the functionality of the reference system. (1987, p. 3)

For the author, the central dimensions that characterize crises are: the unpredictability of the situation that exceeds the established normal institutional capacity; the threat of rupture of the balance of the institutional system; the need for urgent judgment, interpretation, decision and response on the part of those involved. ; its often public and, consequently, mediatic character; and the imbalance in the institution's state of social legitimacy, through the violation of values, norms and moral codes socially established for it.

In summary: nuclear accidents that cause radioactive clouds, fires that cause explosions and spills of chemical substances, malfunctions in experimental reactors, tanker wrecks that end up with the spilling of many tons of crude oil into the ocean, pandemics that paralyze societies and economies. on a planetary scale... there are many circumstances that configure a crisis situation. In fact, it is very difficult (if not impossible) to quantify the variety of dramatic events, more or less unpredictable and with greater or lesser impact, that damage can cause to a company. On the other hand, this phenomenon is not strictly applicable to companies, since any type of organization can also be involved in crisis situations (Regester & Larkin, 2008). In this regard, Norsa (in Lampreia, 2003: 15) is categorical: "there is no activity that can boast of being immune".

For Lopes,

an accident, a complaint, a product violation, a strike, a robbery, a crime involving the company or its employees, a lawsuit, a customer complaint in the media (...), anything negative that escapes control of the company and that gains public visibility can be considered a crisis. (2000, p. 67)

Lampreia (2007) prefers a simpler definition, stating that a crisis is the occurrence of an unusual event that jeopardizes the normal functioning of a business structure, while Piñuel Raigada considers that the notion of crisis corresponds to

a sudden change between two situations, changes that pose a risk to the image and the natural balance of an organization because between the two situations (the situation before and the situation after the crisis) a sudden (unexpected or extraordinary) event takes place in front of which an organization has to react, compromising its image and its internal and external balance before its audiences. (Apud Fita Trías, 2000, p. 123)

According to Fonseca (1999, p. 50), a crisis is a "dangerous and decisive moment" and a "disturbance that alters the normal course of things". The author also analyzes the phenomenon considering it as a "more or less lengthy stage, in which future events must be foreseen, as well as measures to be taken to solve the created problems". Black (apud Cabrero & Cabrero, (2001 [1996]), p. 77) prefers to define crisis situations simply as "unknowns", since "this expression describes, better than any other, the nature of situations". Pulgar Rodríguez (1999, p. 131) considers that these are "exceptionally serious situations for the credit of an organization and delicate moments in the life of the company that compromise its future". The author proposes a very comprehensive concept, understanding the crisis as any situation that is decisive for the survival of a company, which occurs with surprise, and may affect its public (internal and external), its product, the process, the distribution, the security, where there is a notorious scarcity of information and where the organization becomes the center of media attention, which compromises its image, its credibility and its productive capacity. Crisis will then be "each situation or event that requires immediate action to prevent a potential negative impact on an organization or its interlocutors" (Norsa, in Lampreia, 2003, p. 20).

For the author, a broader and more comprehensive definition translates the general and extensive character that characterizes crises. These are extraordinary facts that are distinguished from emergencies insofar as they do not form part and cannot be included in the common aspects of the life of a company, because their resolution requires the application of adequate instruments, and also because of the particularity of being able to have a catastrophic impact on the institution. It is usual for a crisis situation to manifest itself through a phone call from a journalist, a visit by the authorities, through an official or, mostly, content posted online on social networks, but it almost always occurs at times when the company is less available and less prepared to act (Austin and Jin, 2017). For Norsa (in Lampreia, 2003, p. 15): a crisis "can be provoked at any stage of an organization's activity

and functioning” and is often associated with a product (defective or contaminated, which proves to be harmful or dangerous.) or the production process (use of harmful substances, environmental pollution, or accidents such as fire or explosion). However, it can be generated by a wide range of situations, such as involvement in a situation of fraud, a protest movement by environmental associations or trade union organizations, a poorly conceived advertising campaign, or the removal of a top leader. In other words, the origin of a crisis can also be personal, social and judicial reasons, and not just business or union motivations (Fearn-Banks, 2007; Coombs, in Botan & Hazleton, 2009).

As for uniqueness, emphasize that no crisis is the same, even if they are similar. Some can produce human and social panic, as happens in cases of disaster or poisoning, while others are likely to generate economic instability, such as mergers or takeover bids, especially if they are hostile. In all cases, some parameters are considered fundamental and any one of them can be amplified and distorted by disinformation or, conversely, diminished, if a successful communication strategy is used: fast, efficient and as transparent as possible. As for the average impact, it is clear that crises are preferred news, insofar as, often, the poor communication preparation of organizations greatly facilitates the construction of suggestive news.

Indeed, this excessive priority given to bad news is often accentuated by the inability to provide timely and sufficient information on the part of the organization in crisis, which often leads to investigation of various media and unofficial sources.

Finally, regarding the destabilization caused by the crisis, there is also evidence that, by diminishing the significance and appreciation of the institution among its different audiences, the continuity of its activities can be seriously conditioned. The best prevention and – at the same time – therapy, in these cases, is usually communication. No organization is immune to the crisis, nor is it safe from contingencies that can seriously affect its image and/or brand. It is not possible to avoid submission to criticism, discussion and attack by or through the media. However, and in the face of *fait accompli*, the important thing is to overcome the crisis. At the human, organizational and social levels, an organization can come out of an adverse situation reinforced if it excels in method and good management (Elsbach, 2012).

Post-crisis management appears to be worthy of mention, insofar as it can configure opportunities. In fact, with prior and adequate planning, positive results can be obtained, and the company is able to gain in quality of response and in the renewal of the domain of its image. The post-traumatic stage is therefore essential in the future of organizations, the moment when corrective decisions must be taken, extracting lessons from what has happened and restoring confidence to internal and external audiences (Lampreia, 2007; Grappi & Romani, 2015).

3. Crisis Communication: genesis and conceptualizations.

Due to the fact of suffering serious consequences derived from crises, in recent decades administrators and managers have come to be convinced of the need for communication plans for prevention and/or anti-crisis action: “Studies on crisis in the field of communication, are evident “[...] since the mid-1970s, initially in the United States” (Rosa, 2004, p. 69). Public Relations is responsible for working on these issues, and the fact that the management of relationships is the exclusive responsibility of these professionals demonstrates that the suitability of this training to deal with crisis management is superior to that of other professions (Silveira, n.d.). “Public relations activities are extremely important for dealing with crises, as they must assume responsibility for collecting information and organizing contacts with the press and stakeholders.” (Carvas Jr, apud Kunsch, 2006, pp. 235-236).

The truth is that no organization is free from conflicts and crises along its trajectory. In those moments, when the entity’s transparency is called into question, communication becomes a key element to ensure the successful resolution of the situation. As Kreps suggests, conflict situations occur regularly in any organization:

Conflict is a natural and inevitable element of human existence and organization. Because all people are unique and perceive reality in an idiosyncratic way, they are prone to be unaware of a wide variety of topics and goals. The conflict is the process through which individuals express and negotiate their differences. More specifically, the conflict is a struggle expressed between two or more positions in competition, held by one or more individuals, generally based on incompatible beliefs, ideas or goals. The conflict can occur in different levels of communication and in a wide variety of communication scenarios. (1995, p. 211)

However, when conflict hardens in an organization it can lead to a crisis situation. Crisis periods are phases that compromise the organization’s credibility, trust and reputation, and during which communication becomes a more necessary factor than ever. According to Rossie (apud Dilenschneider, 2000), a crisis can be defined as an event or a series of events that can harm the health, success, or even the existence of an organization, depending on how it is perceived by employees, customers, suppliers and other audiences, such as the media, the government, or opinion leaders. Millar & Heath (2004) emphasize the set of interest groups and define a crisis as an unfortunate but predictable situation that has many real and potential consequences for the interests of stakeholders and for the reputation of the organization in question. This means that a crisis can harm those, and consequently the

organization's relationship with them (Coombs, 2010; Cheng, 2015; Frandsen & Johansen, 2016).

From the moment a crisis erupts, it is necessary to act quickly and diligently. Transparency of information towards the media, as well as information and direct communication with suppliers, the internal public and the social base are essential, insofar as they make it possible to satisfactorily control and extinguish a crisis, maintaining reputation and transparency. In this period of time, an adequate flow of information and communication is essential to avoid rumors and reduce uncertainty.

When a crisis spills over into the media, it can take on scandalous proportions, and it is at this point that it accentuates and gains relevance. The main consequences of a crisis can be the loss of reputation, trust, credibility or social alarm. The eventual contagion effect on an entire sector will depend on what Lopez-Quesada (2003, p. 63) calls "hypersensitivity of public opinion", which causes distrust and reinforces the perception of problems.

When a crisis occurs, it is necessary to use the support manual, if any, and take measures. At these times, the organization can manage communication by taking different positions, as Westphalen & Piñuel (1993, pp. 117-121) explain:

a) Silence strategy – consists of not responding and avoiding the input of information. This attitude, which causes information or disinformation, can encourage the "appearance of rumours" (Kapferer, 1989, p. 194), and have a more negative than positive result.

b) Denial strategy – in this case, reality is denied, a reactive attitude is taken, in response to the attack. This attitude can only be taken when the fact attributed to the organization is indisputably false. Otherwise, the consequences can be very serious.

c) Defense mechanism by projection of responsibilities – third parties are accused of their own mistakes. In the medium term, this attitude can prove to be harmful if there is an implication on the part of those who demarcate themselves from the initial responsibility.

d) Problem recognition strategy – consists of taking responsibility and acting accordingly. Adopting a proactive attitude of this type can be the most convenient strategy, whenever an effective solution is offered and the good faith of the organization is clear, since in this way the levels of uncertainty are reduced or disappeared.

Coombs (2007) notes that communication strategies during a crisis range from the most defensive level (denying the problem) to the most accommodating (accepting full responsibility). Between the two extremes there are intermediate strategies such as attacking those who accuse, minimizing responsibility, seeking justifications, pleasing interest groups, correcting the damage, taking full responsibility and apologizing. The levels of perception of transparency depend on the communicative behavior that is taken internally and externally. In the foreground, the work team must be informed of what is happening and what actions are being taken to resolve it. Externally, it is necessary to act in advance of the media, at a time when the spokesperson becomes a key figure to defend the institution's credibility. He must be a person with knowledge of the situation and the strategy to be followed, with communication skills and availability for them. The relationship between the organization and the media in the period prior to the crisis determines their behavior during the conflict, as based on this they will be more belligerent or understanding in the presentation of the facts (Herranz de la Casa, n.d.).

At the same time, the daily use of the Internet also makes it the main and fastest source of information in the face of a crisis (Čavalić, 2015; Eriksson, 2018). The web allows interactive communication, monitoring of events in real time, and offers the possibility of incorporating more complete information with audio and video, which makes it the most interactive tool with interest groups and allows minimizing potential damage.

3.1. Preventive Communication

No two crises are the same and each has its causes, ramifications, duration, rhythm and unforeseen events (Gilpin & Murphy, 2009; Frandsen & Johansen, 2016). However, crises have a common facet: if organizations prepare in advance for this situation, it will be easier to control and overcome it. On the contrary, the factor of surprise and the lack of time for reaction can have very negative effects, and no institution is free of problems that lead to a crisis.

Herrero (1998) distinguishes between avoidable crises – in which the management of potential conflicts is necessary – and non-avoidable crises – resulting from accidents in which planning, and prevention are key. The problem of predictability depends on the ability to measure the risk that is incurred and its magnitude, which can convert the problem or conflict into a crisis or scandal.

The elaboration of a preventive plan that details what to do and how to act is the best way to be prepared; however, very few companies have this predictive ability until the moment they are faced with a disaster situation. The preparation of this plan will make it possible to have a written action protocol available, in which the actions, steps to be taken, the creation of a crisis committee, contacts with institutions and journalists are detailed. At the same time, it is recommended to carry out the simulation of a crisis that can act as a test to determine the degree of coordination in the organization and allows to discover the weaknesses (Gilpin & Murphy, in Botan & Hazleton, 2009, p. 387).

Depending on how the organization perceives and acts on risks, "we can consider that crisis management is

an integrated process that can be developed in three ways: proactive, reactive and reflective” (Mendes & Pereira, 2006, p. 31). Ideally, any organization should have a strategic vision that embodies proactivity in managing a crisis; regardless of its size or area of activity, it must have a communication plan for crisis situations that includes at least the key factors conceptualized below:

- Anticipation. As well as ensuring its facilities, equipment or production methods, each company must have an emergency communication plan. Crisis communication does not allow for improvisation. For this reason, the organization must have a response project for different crisis scenarios, which will prevent injuries resulting from emergencies. However, the effectiveness of organizations is often hampered by the lack of policy, strategy and plans at this level.

- Speed. Experts are unanimous that the four hours immediately following the outbreak of a crisis are crucial for its effective management (Rojas Orduña, n.d.; Berge, 1990; Neves, 2002). Effectively, those first moments are the ones that translate into greater probability of meta-information, and of reducing or neutralizing the negative effects of the crisis. In them, the company must not only produce information, but also have appropriate devices. Among other items, a complete press kit must have been prepared: company history, significant events, business figures, contribution to economic development and to the community, characteristics of its products or services, photographs of facilities, equipment and materials. produced... In addition, a list of media bodies should be prepared in advance, segmented according to audiences (national, regional, local, etc.) and area of specialization (general, economic, financial, techniques...). It is equally advantageous to have a directory of personal contacts in the media, distinguishing two main segments: on the one hand, priority partners, with whom regular contact is maintained; on the other hand, journalists who work with information of a general nature and with whom they maintain more occasional contacts. Likewise, professional entities, business organizations, competent authorities in the sector of activity or business, etc. who, through their influence on their audiences, can be effective messengers.

- Quality information. In times of crisis, information cannot be mediocre. On the contrary, it must be precise, reassuring, active, reactive and multidirectional. When we mention precision, we mean explanations, testable facts, and supporting details. As an example, the best way to face a smear campaign based on rumors or allegations is to stick to the facts, which are always solidly documented (Forni, 2003). Equally, crisis communication should always tend to prioritize the reassuring message, as the consequences of a crisis are often amplified by the anxiety and uncertainty that it generates in different target audiences. The active and reactive transmission of information by the organization must be a constant in crisis situations, with information and communication on its own initiative and in real time, as well as when there is something new in the evolution of the crisis, responding immediately to journalists and researchers from information. Naturally, this effort requires constant knowledge of the evolution of information, and the respective updating of the communication strategy. For the intended final result, the concerted work of the Crisis Management Team is essential, which, logically, must bring together the top manager of the institution and heads of the communication team, under the advice of legal experts and other specialists who must integrate this committee or with the collaborate (Heath, 1988). All information must be multidirectional, not only directed to the outside, but also to internal audiences. Employees have the right to know what happens, or what the consequences of the occurrence are with regard to their specific situation. More than ever, in crisis situations, internal communication must be immediate and accurate. This open attitude towards staff will avoid rumors, concerns or panic that could amplify the effects of the crisis.

At the organizational level, a crisis - whatever its nature - affects the entire institution, its corporate image, and as such a global response must be sought; in the words of Villafaña (1998), the best anti-crisis shield is a positive image. For the author, this is achieved through the daily management of corporate culture, based on communication. An organization that manages communication effectively will always be better prepared to face a crisis; on the contrary, institutions with a low communicative profile will be more vulnerable to unexpected conflicts.

If even everyday issues have the potential to impact the organization, unexpected events can threaten the organization's results, if not jeopardize its independence or survival. An accident, a malicious act, a mechanical failure or human error, an external attack, can create an emergency whose evolution can have dramatic results.

A crisis can be defined as any event that requires immediate action to avoid a potential negative impact on the institution and/or its partners. It can irreparably jeopardize the reputation of the organization or its interlocutors, generate relentless media attention and intervention by the authorities. It is therefore imperative to react quickly in a situation completely different from normal operating conditions, possibly in the absence of all the necessary information, and under strict scrutiny from the outside. And while there is no doubt that it is better to prevent a crisis than to manage a crisis, it is also true that preventive measures can reduce the probability of a crisis but cannot eliminate the possibility of it happening. And a crisis can be managed effectively only if the organization is prepared in advance to face such a situation of instability, providing itself with systems and tools. Recent history has shown us that the question is no longer whether the crisis will happen: the real question is, when, where how and what crisis the organization will face. Preventing and preparing for potential crisis situations requires

systematic and professional work, based on proven methodologies, specific sensitivity and objective external vision (Norsa, 2002).

Of course, it is possible to anticipate possible crises and the responses to them. Faced with a critical situation, organizations can be proactive or reactive. In the first case, efforts are made to provide the organization with rapid and effective response communication mechanisms and procedures that help to reduce or eliminate the negative effects that an eventual crisis can cause on the public (Freeo: n.d.). To this end, information is collected, available and adequate human resources are identified, and the lines of action to be activated during the crisis are defined. In the second hypothesis, only the attempt to minimize the harmful effects of the problem remains, monitoring the situation, taking care of the aftermath and organizing the image reconstruction process.

3.2. Reactive Communication

According to Avery, Lariscy, Kim & Hocke (2010), two predominant theoretical paradigms can be identified with regard to crisis communication response strategies:

a) The “Image Restoration Theory”, by W. Benoit (1995, 1997). More than describing the types of crisis situations, or the stages of a crisis, Image Repair Theory focuses on message options. In other words, what can an organization say when faced with a crisis? This theory offers five broad categories of image restoration strategies, some with variants, that seek to respond to threats. Denial and evasion of responsibility constitute a persuasive attack, rejecting or reducing the responsibility of the accused in the act in question. Severity minimization and corrective action, the third and fourth categories of image restoration, concern the second component of persuasive attack: reducing the severity of the act attributed to the accused. The last general strategy, mortification, tries to restore the image through a request for forgiveness:

Table 1. Response Strategies in Crisis Communication

Denial.	The fact didn't happen
	The fact was carried out by others
Evasion from responsibility	Provocation: we acted in response to others
	Revocability: lack of information or capacity
	Accident: the act was an unintentional mishap
	Good intentions: the intentions were the best when performing the act.
Severity minimization	Reinforcement: highlight the positive characteristics
	Minimization: the act is not very serious
	Differentiation: the act is less offensive than it seems
	Transcendence: the act is negative, but there are other aspects to consider
	Attack on the accuser: reduce the credibility of the accuser
	Compensation: Compensate victims and affected people
Corrective action	A plan is in place to resolve the problem and prevent it from happening again.
Mortification	Take responsibility and apologize for it.

Source: adaptad from Benoit (1995, 1997).

b) The “Situational Crisis Communication Theory” (SCCT), by Coombs (1995, 1998, 2009). As Benoit, Coombs assumes that the use of a particular strategy to respond to a crisis situation depends on its characteristics. The “SCCT” is inspired by a theory of Social Psychology, the “Attribution Theory”, which seeks to classify the way in which individuals attribute causes to events. In the face of negative events, such as those caused by any organizational crisis, stakeholders look for someone to blame. The more responsibility they assign to the organization for the outbreak of the crisis, the more possibilities there will be that the damage to the organization will have a high cost.

For Coombs (2004, 2007), there are three types of crises that are related to the degree of responsibility of an institution for that crisis:

- Victim
- Accident
- Predictable crisis.

The first case sets up situations in which the organization has little or no responsibility for the facts. This includes natural disasters, rumors, violence at work or product tampering, often related to malevolence. In accidents, the author includes disputes, technical accidents, or product returns; finally, and in what naturally

translates the case in which the public most blame the organization, accidents due to human error, returns due to human error, or organizational misconduct arise. This is, then, the most difficult situation to manage, which will still be enhanced, according to Coombs, if there is a previous history of crisis situations and/or a negative reputation hanging over the institution.

The SCCT then argues that, depending on the degree of responsibility attributed to it, the organization should opt for different response strategies. From a defensive strategy (in cases of no fault or weak responsibility) to an accommodative strategy, when responsibility is strong and/or of internal origin (Coombs, 1995, 1998, 2009), in a continuum of response solutions.

We can schematize it like this:

Table 2. Interpreting the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT)

DEFENSIVE ACCOMMODATIVE	Attack	The organization confronts the individual or group who claims there is a crisis	WEAK ACCOUNTABILITY STRONG ACCOUNTABILITY
	Refutation	The organization declares that there is no crisis and explains the reasons for this statement.	
	Excuse	The organization seeks to minimize its responsibility for the crisis: it denies the intention to do harm, and/or claims to have no control over the events that caused the crisis.	
	Justification	The organization seeks to minimize the damage caused by the crisis.	
	Blandishment	The organization seeks public approval: self-praises and/or recalls good practices from the past.	
	Corrective action	The organization seeks to remedy the damage caused by the crisis, acting in order to prevent another similar situation.	
	Apology	The organization fully accepts its responsibility for the crisis, and publicly apologizes for it.	

Source: adapted from Coombs (1998, 2009) and Gonçalves (2011)

4. Conclusions

From the theoretical and conceptual framework resulting from an extensive literature review, we have extracted two basic ideas: that any organization needs to maintain harmonious communication with its internal and external audiences; and that this communication becomes absolutely essential in extraordinary situations, which may jeopardize the credibility and viability of an institution.

In fact, organizations today cannot be seen from a merely mechanistic perspective, in terms of internal functioning or external relations; dialogue is essential, and the guarantee of an institution's reputation is based on planned and continuous communication in times of crisis; only an effortful dialogue with public opinion will enable the maintenance or recovery of organizational credibility and the achievement of institutional objectives.

All organizations are vulnerable to crises. The difference is that some, more prepared, mainly from the point of view of communication, manage problems better (Mitroff Crisis Management; n.d.). Others allow facts, or simply rumors, to destroy their reputation.

During a crisis, the organization must keep employees, customers, shareholders, suppliers, press, lobbies, society and government informed about the problem that has occurred and the actions that are being taken to solve it: any failure in this communication can generate new crises or destroy the institution's image.

However, there is a basic rule with which all the authors studied agree: prevention is the best way to manage an image crisis. Lampreia (2003, p. 31) considers that "the most important characteristic of any good manager is his ability to anticipate situations." The first step is therefore, in advance, to create a Crisis Team. It should point out the possible problems to which the organization is vulnerable (Analysis of Vulnerability Areas) and the actions that should be taken if the scenarios materialize (Crisis Training).

This team must be composed of representatives from different areas of the organization, with close liaison with the Administration. Still in this field, and about the figure of the spokesperson:

A cold technocrat or scientist, however competent he may be, will always be viewed with greater suspicion than someone who appears to share human feelings. «Be a person before being a spokesperson». Remember that people, when sufficiently motivated, are able to understand complex information about risks, even if they do not necessarily agree with you. (Norsa, in Lampreia, 2003, p. 119)

And he reinforces:

In order to effectively manage a crisis, it is necessary to know how to adapt to an extraordinary context, to imprint one's reaction with strong ethical values, to resist defensive instincts and to consider the possible developments of the situation and the possible consequences of our actions, both in the short term, both in the medium and long term. (in Lampreia, 2003, p. 134)

Furthermore, „the ability to effectively manage a crisis is a mental attitude that is acquired on-the-job: it is not something that can be studied in books or in management schools“ (idem). One of the most important assets that an institution must have is the ability to forecast, or, in its absence, to act immediately in the face of problematic situations. That is why, whoever immediately identifies the genesis of a possible crisis situation and takes „the necessary measures to prevent its spread, not only will have their problem solved successfully, but will also save on the inherent costs, in terms of expenditure of time, energy, money and the company's reputation“ (Lampreia, 2003, p. 31). It should be noted that this „response capacity must be agile, emotionally intelligent and lo más hitada posible“ (Xifra, in Fita Trías, 1999, p. 12), and this is a competence that is acquired with experience and training. According to Norsa (in Lampreia, 2003, p. 13) „a characteristic of crises is that they are never the same“. Therefore, „it is not possible to obtain general recipes and strategies of sure success, from the study of past cases“, since „the strategy that worked in one case, may prove to be counterproductive in another“. The author bases these considerations on the fact that all the parties involved in a crisis situation (company, historical moment, workers, customers, suppliers, among others) change their „mode of action“ and react „in a different way in the face of a different case“. Only one of the interlocutors involved acts in a similar way, as „the media always tends to react in the same way to a crisis situation“, focusing on two aspects: „the reason why it happened, and who is responsible „ (idem, *ibid*).

Pires (2008) reinforces this issue of mutability and uncertainty when he recalls that, nowadays, it is the company that has to adapt to the outside and not the outside to the company, since the center of gravity of management is outside the company. organization, in the markets it reaches (...), in the social agents that can influence its activity. This philosophy, which the author calls management with a marketing perspective (idem), starts, as can easily be seen, from the outside of the institution, according to the needs of the market in which it operates, identifying its characteristics (whether demographic, technological, , economic, social or cultural). In this regard, Pulgar Rodriguez (1999, p. 201) emphasizes that „no organization is a closed, endogamous, self-sufficient system, where no one external force influences“. In fact, this is effectively why one of the basic tasks of Public Relations is precisely to open the channels of communication between a company and the publics of its most immediate interest (Penteado, 1993), without forgetting that this function, which develops from within to outside, which begins within the company itself. As noted by Norsa (in Lampreia, 2003, p. 50) it is important, once the different audiences involved in the crisis are known and analyzed, to opt for „instruments of direct communication“ (such as intranets, e-mails, informational flashes, conferences), capable of to convey to interlocutors the official position of the company at first hand, avoiding the discomfort that occurs when one learns about the main news through the press. In this regard, the author suggests that priority be given to internal audiences, making them aware of the communiqués sent to newsrooms, not least because „workers can be formidable allies, more credible even than the company itself“. In other words, it is important not to forget that internal audiences form an important channel of communication with the outside world, in addition to representing decisive influences on public opinion.

The importance of maintaining a positive image is fundamental, so, according to Fita Trías (1999), it should never be underestimated in any act that the company performs, since the more favorable our image, the more we can use it when we need to. her. However, and for Lampreia (1998, p. 69), the way in which the crisis is managed also depends on „the degree of commitment of the administration, the prevention measures that have been authorized, the formation and training of the crisis management team and the validity of the program that has been implemented“. The proper management of favorable crisis communication is essential to help an organization „get out of a disaster situation, limiting its damage and (...) with the possibility of an „another opportunity““ (Norsa, in Lampreia, 2003, p. 14). However, it is important that the people who represent and embody these organizations provide „proof of [their] moral worth“ (idem), because to manage a crisis well „the only recipe is common sense and ethical principles. The rest is tactical and can only help if the two indispensable ingredients are present».

In crisis management, credibility is also a key strategic factor. It works as if it were a trump card that we decided to play at the worst time and that we know can help us win, even if the situation is not right. However, as Vidor observes (in Lopes, 2000), „credibility is something that is conquered step by step, with a lot of work, patience, seriousness and information“; it is therefore advisable to start working early and invest in it because communication difficulties can provoke hostility or destroy the image of a large company in a matter of minutes, and at that time it will be too late to start investing in image capital. The uncertainty and insecurity that characterize modern times, regardless of the challenges they entail and entail, they have an important benefit. It is that the simple fact of knowing that they exist and exert influence, represents, in itself, an advantage, insofar as we can and should prepare for action. That current insecurity is not a mysterious unknown, but a known variable that we must always take into account. The solution, already suggested by Lampreia (1998, p. 78), presupposes a continuous process of learning, in which companies must „learn to live in insecurity, better saying, learn to build security in full and permanent gale“.

Many are taking steps to become better able to respond, promoting studies on satisfaction, needs and preferences of their markets, and responding to their complaints and suggestions. Institutions that respond to their audiences recognize the importance of having satisfied users or consumers, and understand that institutional web pages should be used as a resource to counter or complement the information that is being conveyed by the media.

Effectively, managing crises a decade or two ago is not the same as doing it today. If in the past, the priority audiences in crisis situations were journalists and customers, nowadays, and with the speed and ease with which news is transmitted electronically, the common citizen becomes a central element when defining the communication strategy. Internet 2.0 has allowed any user to actively participate in the public sphere, through the exchange of information and contributions on the most diverse digital platforms. Given this reality, it is imperative that organizations understand the impact (positive or negative) that new technologies can have in times of tension. On the one hand, they allow you to get in touch with your stakeholders in real time, receiving their inputs and letting them know the evolution of the situation in real time; on the other hand, the lack of monitoring or the inadequate use of online networks can drastically worsen the situation, due to the amplifying power that digital platforms have (Austin & Jin, (Ed.), 2017; Cheng & Cameron, 2017; Reuter & Kaufhold, 2018). In order to transform the challenge of digital media and the citizen-journalist into an opportunity in a time of crisis, organizations need to transform their standard response types of a decade ago into an online dialogue. Effective crisis management on the contemporary web requires the institution to dedicate time and resources to engage in dialogue with dissatisfied consumers, supporters, detractors... In this way, organizations allow all audiences to be an active part in the process of overcoming the crisis that, well managed, can give the former the epithet of “careful”, “attentive”, “receptive” and “honest”, and consequently attract new consumers, through conversation and not debate (Castelló & Domingo, 2007; Oltmanns, 2008; Lin *et al.*, 2016).

5. Acknowledgments

This work is funded by National Funds through the FCT – Foundation for Science and Technology, I.P., within the scope of the Project Ref. UIDB/05507/2020. Furthermore, we would like to thank the Centre for Studies in Education and Innovation (CI&DEI) and the Polytechnic of Viseu for their support.

References

- Austin, L., & Jin, Y. (Ed.). (2017). *Social media and crisis communication*. Routledge.
- AAVV (2004). *Crisis Management: master the skills to prevent disasters*. Harvard Business School Publishing Corporation.
- Ahmed, M., & Sallam, M. (2016). The Impact of Brand Image and Corporate Branding on Consumer's Choice: The Role of Brand Equity. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 8(1), 98-106.
<https://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/ijms/article/view/56928/30476>
- Avery, E., Lariscy, R., Kim, S., & Hocke, T. (2010). A quantitative review of crisis communication research in public relations from 1991 to 2009. *Public Relations Review*, 36, 190-192.
- Bastien, C. (n.d.). *A noção de crise no senso comum e nas ciências sociais*. <https://www.repository.utl.pt/bitstream/10400.5/759/1/CBsenso.pdf>
- Barquero-Cabrero, J., & Barquero Cabrero, M. (2001). *O Livro de Ouro das Relações Públicas*. Porto Editora.
- Beinstein, J. (n.d.). *El concepto de crisis a comienzos del siglo XXI. Pensar la decadencia*. https://www.archivochile.com/Debate/crisis_08_09/crisis00165.pdf
- Benoit, W. (1995). *Accounts, Excuses, and Apologies: A Theory of Image Restoration Strategies*. State University of New York Press.
- Benoit, W. (1997). Image repair discourse and Crisis Communication. *Public Relations Review*. Elsevier, 23(2), 177-186.
- Berge, D. (1990). *The First 24 Hours – a Comprehensive Guide to Successful Crisis Communications*. Basil Blackwell.
- Botan, C., & Hazleton, V. (Eds) (2010). *Public Relations Theory II*. Routledge.
- Bundy, J., Pfarrer, M., Short, C., & Coombs, T. (2017). Crises and Crisis Management: Integration, Interpretation, and Research Development. *Journal of Management*, 43(6), 1661-1692.
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0149206316680030>
- Carvalho, A., & Pestana, D. (2021). Crise Econômica, um fenômeno que a teoria econômica não é suficiente para prever. 10.13140/Rg.2.2.35781.78566
- Castelló, E., & Domingo, D. (2007): "L'ús de les TIC en la comunicació de risc i la gestió d'emergències: oportunitats i límits". In Farré, J; Fernández Cavia, J. (Eds.) Publicacions URV-Cossetània.
- Čavalić, A. (2015). Crisis communication and the Internet.
- Cheng, Y. (2015). *How Social Media is Changing Crisis Communication Strategies: Evidence from the updated literature*. International Communication Association (ICA) 65th Annual Convention, Puerto Rico, USA.
- Cheng, Y., & Cameron, G. (2017). The status of Social-Mediated crisis Communication (SMCC) research. In L. Austin & Y. Jin (Eds.), *social media and crisis communication*, 9-20. Routledge.
- Coombs, W. T. (1995). Choosing the right words: the development of guideline for the selection of the appropriate crisis response strategies. *Management Communication Quarterly*. 8, 447-476.
- Coombs, W. T. (1998). An analytic framework for crisis situations: better responses from a better understanding of the situation. *Journal of Public Relations Research*. 10, 177-192.
- Coombs, W. T. (2004). Impact of Past Crises on Current Crisis Communication: Insights from Situational Crisis Communication Theory. *Journal of Business Communication*. Sage Publications, 41, 265-289.
- Coombs, W. T. (2007). *Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing and Responding*. Sage.
- Coombs, W. T. (2009). Crisis Management: a communicative approach. In BOTAN, C. & HAZLETON, V. (Eds). *Public Relations Theory II*. Routledge.
- Coombs, W. T. (2010). Crisis communication: A developing field. In R. L. Heath (Ed.), *The Sage Handbook of Public Relations*: 477-488. Sage.
- Coombs, W. T. (2010). Conceptualizing Crisis Communication. In *Handbook of Risk and Crisis Communication* ed. Robert L. Heath and H.Dan O'Hair, Routledge Handbooks Online.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203891629.ch5>
- Crandall, W., Parnell, J., & Spillan, J. (2013). *Crisis Management: Leading in the New Strategy Landscape*. SAGE Publishing.
- Dafermos, M. (2022). Discussing the Concept of Crisis in Cultural-historical Activity Research: A Dialectical Perspective. *Hu Arenas*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s42087-022-00289-4>
- Dilenschneider, R. (2000). *The corporate communications bible*. New Millennium Press.
- Elsbach, K. (2012). A framework for reputation management over the course of evolving controversies. In M. L. Barnett & T. G. Pollock (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of corporate reputation*, 466-486. Oxford University Press.
- Eriksson, M. (2018). Lessons for Crisis Communication on Social Media: a Systematic Review of What Research Tells the Practice. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 12:5, 526-551. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1553118X.2018.1510405>
- Fearn-Banks, K. (2007). *Crisis Communication – a Casebook Approach*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
- Fita Trías, J. (2000). *Comunicación en Programas de Crisis*. Gestión 2000.

- Fonseca, A. (1999). *Dicionário para Relações Públicas*. Publismai.
- Forni, J. (2003). Comunicação em tempo de crise. In J. DUARTE, *Assessoria de imprensa e relacionamento com a mídia - Teoria e técnica*. Atlas, 2003. 363-388.
- Frandsen, F., & Johansen, W. (2016). *Organizational Crisis Communication* (1st ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Frandsen, F., & Johansen, W. (Eds.) (2020). *A brief history of crisis management and crisis communication: From organizational practice to academic discipline*.
<https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110554236-002>
- Freeo, S. (n.d.). Crisis Communication Plan: a PR Blue Print. <https://www.niu.edu/newsplace/crisis.html>
- Gilpin, D., & Murphy, P. (2009 [2006]). Reframing Crisis Management through complexity. In Botan, C. & Hazleton, V. (Eds). *Public Relations Theory II*. Routledge.
- González Herrero, A. (1998). Marketing Preventivo – la Comunicación de Crisis en la Empresa. Bosch Comunicación.
- Grappi, S., & Romani, S. (2015). Company Post-Crisis Communication Strategies and the Psychological Mechanism Underlying Consumer Reactions. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 27, 22-45.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2014.924839>
- Guth, D. (1995). Organisational Crisis Experience and Public Relations Roles. *Public Relations Review*. Elsevier, 21, 2, 123-136.
- Habermas, J. (1976). *Legitimation Crisis*. Heinemann Educational Books.
- Heath, R. (1988). *Strategic Issues Management: How organizations influence and respond to public interests and politics*. Jossey-Bass.
- Herranz de La Casa, J. (n.d.). *La Comunicación y la transparencia en las organizaciones no lucrativas* (Doctoral Thesis). <https://eprints.ucm.es/11539/1/T29229.pdf>
- Holtzhausen, D., & Zerfass, A. (2015). *Strategic communication: Opportunities and challenges of the research area*. The Routledge handbook of strategic communication. 3-17. Routledge.
- las, R., Gao, J. (2012). Introduction to Crisis Management. In: Alas, R., Gao, J. (Eds.). *Crisis Management in Chinese Organizations*. Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230363168_1
- Kreps, G. (1995). *La comunicación en las organizaciones*. Addison-Wesley Iberoamericana.
- Kapferer, J.-N. (1989). *Rumores. El medio de difusión más antiguo del mundo*. Plaza & Janés Editores.
- Kunsch, M. (org.) (2006). *Obtendo resultados com relações públicas*. Tomson.
- Jaques, T. (2010). Reshaping Crisis Management: The Challenge for Organizational Design. *Organizational Development Journal*, 28(1), pp. 9-17.
- Juglar, C. (1862). Des crises commerciales et de leur retour périodique en France, en Angleterre et aux États-Unis. Guillaumin.
- Lampreia, J. (1998). *Comunicação Empresarial – as Relações Públicas na Gestão*. Texto Editora.
- Lampreia, J. (Coord.) (2003). *Gestão de Crise – uma Perspectiva Europeia*. Hugin Editores.
- Lampreia, J. (2007). *Da Gestão de Crise ao Marketing de Crise*. Texto Editora.
- Lin, X., Spence, P. R., Sellnow, T. L., & Lachlan, K. A. (2016). Crisis communication, learning and responding best practices in social media. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 65, 601-605.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2016.05.080>
- Lopes, M. (2000). *Quem tem Medo de Ser Notícia?*. Makron Books.
- López-Quesada, M. (2003). *Estamos en crisis*. Dosset 2000.
- Mahoney, J. (2021). *The Strategic Communication Imperative for Mid-and Long-Term Issues Management*. Routledge.
- Maia, H. (2017). *Crise de imagem: uma análise de caso*. Editora Unemat.
- Mendes, A. (n.d.). *Subsídios para uma Teoria das Crises Políticas*.
<https://www.bocc.ubi.pt/pag/mendes-antonio-subsidios-teoria-criSES-politicas.pdf>
- Mendes, A., & Pereira, F. (Coords.) (2006). *Crises – de Ameaças a Oportunidades. Gestão Estratégica de Comunicação de Crises*. Edições Sílabo.
- Mikušová, M., and Horváthová, P. (2019). Prepared for a Crisis? Basic Elements of Crisis Management in an Organisation. *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja*, 32(1), 1844-1868. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677X.2019.1640625>
- Millar, D., & Heath, R. (Eds.) (2004). *Responding to crisis. A rhetorical approach to crisis communication*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Mitroff, I., Pearson, C., & Harrington, L. (1996). *The essential guide to managing corporate crises*. Oxford.
- Morin, E. (1976). Pour une crisologie. *Communications*, 25, 149-162.
- Mucchielli, A. (1993). *Communication Interne et Management de Crise*. Les Éditions d' Organisation.
- Neves, R. (2002). *Crises empresariais com a opinião pública: Como evitá-las e administrá-las*. Mauad.
- Norsa, L. (2002). *Crisis Management*. Esselibri.
- Norsa, L. (2009). *Risk, issue e crisis management. Gestire l'inevitabile per salvaguardare il valore aziendale*. Ipsoa.
- Oltmanns, R. (2008). Environmental crisis communication. In Anthonissen, P. *Crisis Communication: Practical PR Strategies for Reputation Management and Company Survival*. Kogan Page.

- Pearson, C., & Clair, J. (1998). Reframing crisis management. *Academy of Management Review*, 23, 1, 59-76.
- Penteado, J. (1993). *Relações Públicas nas Empresas Modernas*. Livraria Pioneira Editora.
- Piñuel, J., & Westphalen, M. (2003). *La dirección de comunicación. Prácticas Profesionales. Dicionário Técnico*. Ediciones del Prado.
- Pires, A. (2008). *Marketing: conceitos, técnicas e problemas de gestão*. Editorial Verbo.
- Pulgar Rodríguez, L. (1999). *Comunicación de Empresa en Entornos Turbulentos*. ESIC Editorial.
- Putra, P. A., & Yasa, N.N. (2017). *The Role of Corporate Image And Satisfaction In Mediating The Effect Of Corporate Social Responsibility On Customer Loyalty*.
- Regester, M., & Larkin, J. (2008). *Risk Issues and Crisis Management*. Koogan Page.
- Reuter, C., & Kaufhold, M. A. (2018). Fifteen years of social media in emergencies: A retrospective review and future directions for crisis Informatics. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 26(1), 41-57. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/1468-5973.12196>
- Rojas Orduña, O. (n.d.). *A comunicação em momentos de crise*. <https://www.bocc.ubi.pt/pag/orduna-octavio-comunicacao-em-momentos-de-crise.pdf>
- Rosa, M. (2004). *A era do escândalo: lições, relatos e bastidores de quem viveu as grandes crises de imagem*. Geração Editorial.
- Rosier, B. (2001). *As Teorias das Crises Económicas*. Editorial Bizâncio.
- Sahin, S., Ulubeyli, S., and Kazaza, A. (2015). Innovative Crisis Management in Construction: Approaches and the Process. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 195, 2298-2305. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.06.181>
- Salinas, A. (n.d.). *Crises Organizacionais são uma Questão de Ciclos? Notas Críticas e Reflexões sobre o Campo da Gestão de Crises*.
- Silveira, M. (2010). *A importância do plano de gerenciamento de crises em empresas prestadoras de serviços: estudo de caso*.
- Starn, R. (1976). Métamorphoses d'une notion, *Communications*, 25, 6.
- Villafañe, J. (1998). *Imagem Positiva – Gestão Estratégica da Imagem das Empresas*. Edições Sílabo.
- Westphalen, M., & Piñuel-Raigada (2003). *La dirección de comunicación. Prácticas Profesionales. Dicionário Técnico*. Ediciones del Prado.
- Wiener, A., & Kahn, H. (1967). *The Year 2000. A Framework for Speculation on the Next Thirty-Three Years*. MacMillan.
- Hazaa, Y., Almaqtari, F., & Al-Swidi, A. (2021) Factors Influencing Crisis Management: A systematic review and synthesis for future research. *Cogent Business & Management*, 8(1), 1878979. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311975.2021.1878979>
- Zamoum, K., & Gorpe, T. (2018). Crisis Management: A Historical and Conceptual Approach for a Better Understanding of Today's Crises. In K. Holla, M. Titko, & J. Ristvej (Eds.), *Crisis Management - Theory and Practice*. IntechOpen. <https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.76198>