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Communication
during a long-term **crisis**:
Identifying how administrators
can provide Biblical
encouragement to faculty/staff

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Crisis Communication: Theory and Practice

by AJ Zaremba (2010/14)

5 Immutable Truths

1) Crises are inevitable. Crisis communicators can and must acknowledge the inevitability of crisis and plan for them before they occur.

2) In case after case, transparent and honest communication has been proven to be a key to effective crisis communication.

3) When in doubt follow a Golden-Rule approach.

4) An organization's culture can determine crisis communication success.

5) Crisis communication requires training and skill sets that even bright executives may not possess.

Crisis Communication: Theory and Practice

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- Crises happen.
- Organizations that are profitable and well managed can encounter sudden problems and stagger.
- Crises require communication with various audiences.
- The quality of these communications is crucial for the success of the organization.
- Sloppy communication during crises can plague an organization.

Defining Crisis

- Routine Crisis

- Something already faced.
- There is some type of plan or a plan that you can get from someone else.
- Similar types of things have occurred elsewhere.
- Knowledge-based solutions exists.

- Unprecedented Crisis

- New
- Never faced
- Not sure where to start
- Competing Priorities
- Unknown future
- Unknown timeline
- Takes teams of people to find solutions.

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Where does this leave Academic Admins?



Communicating Vision and Encouragement

Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he. Prov. 29:18 (KJV)

And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make *it* plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. Hab. 2:2 (KJV)

Do not rebuke an older man but **encourage** him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity. 1 Tim. 5:1-2 (ESV)

Biblical References

stories that reflect Biblical communication

Queen Esther gets advice from Mordecai before facing the king...

- the entire race of Jews in the country were facing annihilation
- Haman sent edicts from the king to every region of the country to kill every man, woman and child of Jewish descent
- Queen Esther knew the penalty of going before the king unannounced was death, "except the one to whom the king holds out the golden scepter so that he may live".

Biblical References

stories that reflect Biblical communication

- Mordecai gives her the advice to hide her ethnicity before she went to the king (before she was chosen as queen).
- Mordecai shares with Queen Esther that there is a plot against the king. She tells the king and saves his life.
- Mordecai cannot tell Esther how to go before the king, but she tells Mordecai to get every Jew to fast for her for three days/nights.
- Esther went before the king knowing that God's will would be done, and it saved her and her people.

Biblical References

stories that reflect Biblical communication

Ruth gets advice from Naomi before gleaning or going to Boaz...

- their family is facing extreme poverty (*a lifetime of begging, hard-work, and food insecurity*)
- their husbands have died (*their support and position in the community*)
- Ruth is facing excommunication/exile (*she is a foreigner*)

Biblical References

stories that reflect Biblical communication

- Naomi gives Ruth the advice to glean in Boaz's field.
- Naomi advises Ruth on how to get the attention of Boaz.
- Naomi knew and understood the culture and the protocols that Ruth had never known.
- Naomi prayed and believed that Boaz would be their redeemer.

Biblical References

stories that reflect Biblical communication

Young David goes to King Saul for advice before facing the giant...

- the country was in crisis for 40 days
- the giants were taunting the inhabitants of the country
- no one was willing to face the giant

Biblical References

stories that reflect Biblical communication

- King Saul gives him this advice, "Go and the Lord be with you".
- King Saul sends David in his armor which does not fit and is cumbersome.
- As a leader, the king can only give him the tools that he has to send him into a fight that the king has not faced.
- David knew from experience that he had to fight the battle the way he had done in the past by trusting God.

Practical Application for Academic Admins

- **Scheduled communication**

- Online meetings
- Recorded messages
- Regular briefings

- **Create space for support**

- Share scriptures
- Send prayers of support
- Encourage prayer walks

- **Create trainings**

- Offer online TedTalk style
- Ask faculty to share tips
- Give examples (how to best address students/parents/media)

- **Respond to issues with faith**

- Support faith with actions
- Support faculty/staff through the struggle
- Be available

Scriptures to Share

- [100 Encouraging Verses](#)
- [100 Verses on Prayer](#)
- [100 Verses on Thankfulness](#)

I have found that sharing verses is more effective when it is personalized and specific. Blanket emails are good but may not be as effective. Offer to pray for specific needs. Be the model for the positions you oversee.



Questions?

Feedback?

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