



Issue Management & Crisis Communication

ARMA Spring Mtg.

Miami Beach

3/16/05

Disclaimer

**Effective communication
during a crisis in our industry
is not a competitive issue.**

Agenda

- **Issue Management 101**
- **If a Crisis Occurs...**
- **Communication/Media Tips**
- **Q&A/Discussion**

Issue Definition

**Important topics being
discussed, disputed or at risk.**

- Oxford American Dictionary

Jim's 3 Rules of Issue Management



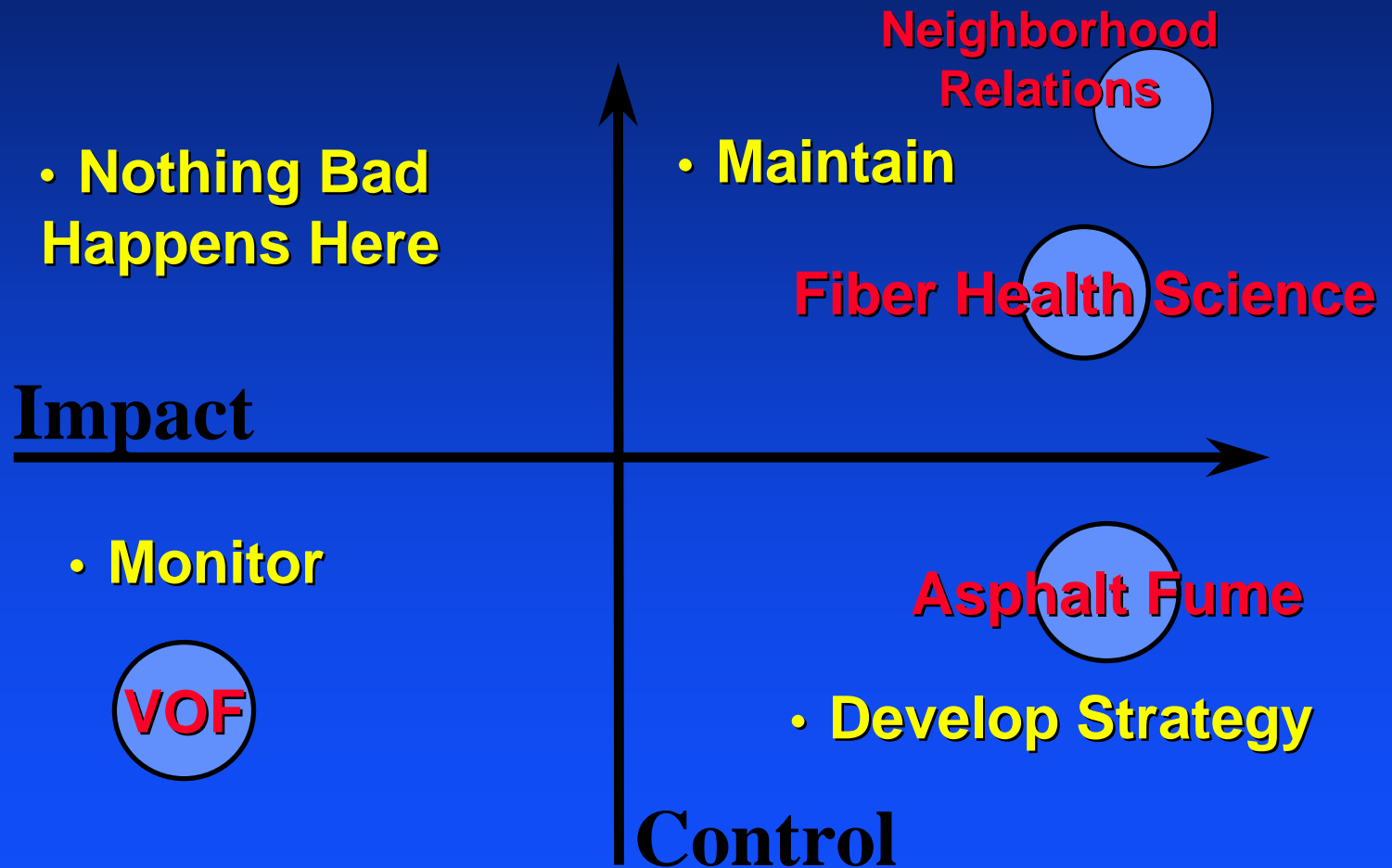
- 1. “Resolved issues are assets, unresolved issues are liabilities”**
- 2. “It’s too late to look for the answer after the question is asked”**
- 3. “If you can’t explain it to your mother it might not be a good idea.”**



Issue Management Helps You...

- **Find Information**
- **Develop Focused Messages**
- **Locate and Leverage Ally Support**

Determining Which Issues to Manage



Issue Communication Process

- **Assemble leadership team**
- **Identify key issues**
- **Develop messages by issue**
- **Determine “tough” questions and prepare answers**
- **Identify spokesperson**
- **Identify key media to brief**
- **Determine timing to meet with employees and community**

Issue or Crisis?

- **Health Concern**
- **Odor Complaint**
- **Explosion with Injuries**
- **Loss of Limb/Fatality**
- **Murder/Hostage Situation**

Crisis Criteria

**A threat to the enterprise...
over an extended period of time...
...with a speed of events demanding
constant action.**

Before A Crisis (Now!)

- **Establish and nourish relationships**
- **Proactive communication**
- **Determine resources available to help**
- **Evaluate audiences most at risk - schools, hospitals, nursing homes, retiree communities**
- **Develop a fact sheet**
- **Conduct “Message Development & Media Training” for key communicators.**
- **Name one spokesperson**

During A Crisis

- **One spokesperson!**
- **Reinforce instructions to gate guard, switchboard and leader team**
- **Avoid speculation regarding the specific issue in play, no matter how sure you think you are at the moment**

After A Crisis

- **Hold post-crisis review**
- **How to prevent a similar crisis in the future?**
- **How to improve performance if there is a repeat?**
- **Get feedback from any outside agency involved**
- **Analyze media coverage**
- **Plan proactive communication**
- **Schedule media training**
- **See “Before A Crisis”**

Rules of Engagement

■ Your rights

- be treated courteously

■ Media rights

- be on public property, e.g., roads and sidewalks
- photograph what they can see from public property
- talk with employees off the job

■ No “right of review”

Avoid Media Conflict

- **Be polite - It doesn't cost anymore to be polite**
- **Understand that the media are doing their job**
- **Don't overstep your bounds, i.e., try to prohibit media from doing something they know they can do, such as photograph the facility from public property**
- **Try to accommodate journalists if you can, e.g., allow TV truck to park on plant property if it will not be in the way**
- **Explain your concern for personal safety and protecting the facility from further damage**

Media Tips

■ Have your own agenda

- Your job is not to simply answer media questions
- Your job is to deliver your message
- Use tough questions to bridge back to key messages

■ Know your key message points

- Maximum of three
- What do you want to see on TV or in the newspaper?
- Say it! Repeat it!

Media Relations Techniques

■ Buying time

- can't talk now; I'll call you back shortly
- what do you want to know?

■ Pre-interview discussions

- a preview of the questions
- clarify in advance your expertise

Techniques (continued)

- **Body language**
 - sit up
 - look at interviewer
- **Avoid repeating negative statements**
- **Bridge to key messages**
- **Avoid “no comment”**
- **There is no such thing as “off the record”**
- **Repeat key messages**

Information You Can Use

- **Emergency/Media Tips Card**
- **Media Tips**
- **Media Training? An ARMA event?
1/2 or whole day?**
- **ARMA ARISM Facts on Asphalt Fumes
(updated?)**
- **Updated lists of YOUR Crisis Team, Facility
Listing, Plant Fast Facts, Holding
Statements, Press Release Templates, Q&A**

For More Information



jim.worden@owenscorning.com



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Rule #3