

TABLE 11.1 Crisis communication strategies

Perception of low level of responsibility	
Non-existence strategies	Claim of denying the crisis
1. denial	A simple statement denying that a crisis exists
2. clarification	An extension of the denial tactic with attempts to explain why there is no crisis
3. attack and intimidation	A tactic of confronting the person or group who claims that a crisis exists; may include a threat to use 'force' (e.g., a lawsuit) against the accuser
Distance strategies	Claim of distancing the organization from direct responsibility for the crisis
1. excuse	A tactic of denying intention or volition by scapegoating others for the crisis
2. downplay	A tactic of convincing stakeholders or the general public that the situation is not that bad in itself or compared to other crises
Association strategies	Claim of connecting the organization to things positively valued by stakeholders and publics
1. bolstering	A tactic of reminding stakeholders and the general public of existing positive aspects of the organization (e.g., reminders of past charitable donations or a history of fair worker treatment) in order to offset the negatives the crisis brings to the organization
2. transcendence	A tactic of associating the negatives and loss arising from a crisis with a desirable, higher order goal (e.g., animal testing to develop life-saving drugs)
Suffering strategy	Claim that the organization suffers from the crisis
1. victimization	A tactic of portraying the organization as a victim of the crisis in order to win public sympathy
Perception of high level of responsibility	
Acceptance strategy	Claim accepting responsibility or culpability for the crisis
1. full apology	A tactic of simply apologizing for the crisis and accepting the blame
2. remediation	A tactic of announcing some form of compensation or help to victims (money, goods, aid, etc.)
3. repentance	A tactic of asking for forgiveness. The organization apologises for the crisis and asks stakeholders and the general public to forgive its misdeeds
Accommodative strategy	Claim promising to prevent the crisis from recurring
1. rectification	A tactic of taking corrective action to prevent a recurrence of the crisis in the future

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