

BAD CRISIS MANAGEMENT MEANS WAR: How President George W. Bush Constructed Americans' Collective Memory of September 11th Through the Media

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September 11, 2001 began as an ordinary fall day in the United States. Not until about 8:50 that morning did a plane hit the north tower of the World Trade Center, launching terrorist attacks that would mark world history. With numerous media sources informing the public of the current state of the nation and capturing every moment as events continued to unfold our societal collective memory of September 11th was constituted by the press coverage and actions of the Bush Administration. This case study analyzes President George W. Bush and Administration's handling of the situation and their crisis communication response.

Supplementary Teaching Note:

The objective of this case study and supporting documentation is to serve as a learning exercise to illustrate ideal public relations practice in crisis and issues management and communication.

From the case study and presentation readers are informed about key aspects to consider when attempting to develop and implement crisis and issues management strategies and tactics.

Readers are presented with general public relations standard practices and are asked to hypothetically apply the learned techniques to the case study as if they were handling the situation and designing and implementing their own crisis communication response.

The Arthur W. Page Society, in alliance with the Institute for Public Relations, sponsors an annual competition for the writing of original case studies by students enrolled in an accredited school of business, communication or journalism and who are pursuing a degree that is focused on corporate communications and the practice of public relations. The objectives of the competition are to:

- Introduce the practical applications of the core principles that define public relations as a critical function of management to scholars, teachers, and students
- Encourage research that contributes to the profession's body of knowledge and provides practical suggestions on how to improve the corporate public relations function

My case study meets the Arthur W. Page Society Principles and Guidelines. Specific instructions and examples of last year's cases are available at: http://www.awpagesociety.com/site/resources/case_studies/.

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