

Crisis Communication Exercise #7 - Facing Pushback

Directions

Your group has chosen to address the following crisis scenario: **Facing Pushback—Your library is facing pushback for stopping or downgrading a service.**

Use this worksheet to develop a communication outline in response to your crisis. Consider the four critical aspects of a communication outline—**audience, message, delivery method and source**. The purpose of the exercise is to practice identifying the key elements of a crisis communication plan at the surface level, as well as how to develop a response when an urgent situation arises.

Crisis communication outline

Audience—Who are the stakeholders that need to be communicated with? Consider primary and secondary audiences.

Upper administration so they're not surprised - this will vary by campus (and levels of trust in library administrator)
 People using the service

Message—What tough questions should we prepare for and how will we respond?

What is the reason? (I would have chosen differently) - seeking to understand others, what would change/nuance/flex the decision? Are we willing to readjust mid-course or provide additional options? Different sets of communication for different people (students - regular and student workers, faculty, people on social media)

Providing context - what are the data points? Proactively having data points on hand is very important.

What would it take for you to change your mind? (what is negotiable and non-negotiable)

Five stages of grief - anger, denial, bargaining... finally acceptance

Delivery Method—What communication tools will we use to deliver the information (face-to-face conversation, email, website, etc.)?

Every mode! Depends on context and audience

Face-to-face conversation

Is there a way to communicate directly?

This is happening, plan for it! Provide context and advance notice

Source—Who should own the message? Who will speak on behalf of the library and continue to keep others in the loop?

The library should try to keep ownership of the message as much as possible.
Dean or Director of Library ought to be primary spokesperson in times of crisis. (Best face, with trust of relationship with upper administration, leadership there to take the heat for people below - create an environment in which they can work without dealing with these things).