

CFAM4.4.7

Manage internal and external issues and risks, and meet organisational communications challenges



Overview

This is about ensuring that the organisation is ready to meet communications challenges that may arise. It involves keeping the board and staff informed of developments within and without the organisation, and preparing contingency plans to prevent and/or resolve these challenges. It includes seeking to protect the organisation's corporate reputation in times of financial change such as mergers and acquisitions.

For the purpose of this unit, 'organisation' can mean a self-contained entity such as a private sector company, a charity or a local authority, or a significant operation unit, with a relative degree of autonomy, within a larger organisation.

The abbreviation 'PR' denotes 'public relations' throughout this unit.

This unit is recommended for middle and senior managers involved in addressing communications challenges. Such managers might be employed directly by the organisation or work for an agency/consultancy.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1 monitor the news and stakeholder environments, and identify and assess those events, trends and patterns that may affect the organisation adversely
- P2 identify, assess and prioritise risks to the organisation's corporate reputation
- P3 work closely with the senior team to develop and agree contingency plans involving public relations activities in response to identified risk scenarios
- P4 identify potential crises and agree appropriate public relations activities to use in crisis
- P5 ensure that a crisis management team is prepared and includes senior managers, corporate lawyers and a nominated spokesperson(s), with all members briefed regarding their roles in the event of a crisis
- P6 establish crisis management plans which allow for clear, transparent and accountable communications with the media and relevant stakeholders during crises
- P7 implement crisis management plans correctly and in conjunction with the crisis management team, where necessary

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

General knowledge and understanding

- K1 an awareness of the crisis management cycle, and the methods and procedures relevant to avoiding crises
- K2 the principles of conflict management and how to apply these
- K3 the principles of contingency planning and how to apply these
- K4 the main types of challenge that require communications crisis planning, and the steps to consider in the planning process
- K5 the importance of maintaining clear, transparent and accountable communications with the media and other stakeholders during crises, and procedures for doing this

You need to know and understand:

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

- K6 legal, regulatory and ethical requirements affecting the choice and implementation of public relations programmes
- K7 legal implications for organisations in times of crisis

You need to know and understand:

Context specific knowledge and understanding

- K8 the environment and market in which the organisation operates
- K9 key external and internal developments affecting the organisation, the nature of their impact, and the implications for the organisation in terms of potential risks
- K10 the organisations key stakeholder groups, and their interests and requirements relating to the organisation

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Additional Information

Behaviours

1. You anticipate likely future scenarios based upon a realistic analysis of trends and developments
2. You present ideas and arguments clearly, concisely and convincingly
3. You identify clearly the value and benefits to others of a proposed course of action
4. You identify individual responsibilities and hold them to account
5. You brief those involved clearly, concisely and accurately
6. You take personal responsibility for making things happen

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