

Masters in International Affairs

Academic year 2010-2011

Decision making and leadership in crisis situation

IA005 – Fall Semester –

Time :

9 December, 9.15 - 18.00

10 December, 9.15 - 18.00

Location :

Lausanne, EPFL (Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne)
: Room BC03

Course Description

The objective of this intensive two-day workshop is to introduce students to the concepts of communication when operating in a crisis atmosphere under intense scrutiny of multiple stakeholders. Students will practice how to prepare and manage a crisis while communicating effectively with all stakeholders involved. They will learn that in a crisis situation, many different stakeholders or interest groups may exist, as well as many channels of communication, particularly with respect to the media. How successfully one handles relations with the different stakeholders may make the difference between a major “public relations disaster” and enhancing one’s company or personal image and career.

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Syllabus

Course Website

<http://graduateinstitute.ch/mia/mia/curriculum/workshops1/crisis.html>

Requirements

1. Requirements: Fluency in English

Grading

Grading will be based 100% on attendance, class participation in exercises, discussions and oral and/or written presentations/reports.

Organisation

MIA students will be merged with EPFL PhD students in science and engineering for this unique learning experience. The idea is for our MIA students to enlarge their perspectives by working on special topics with engineers and scientists, and for engineers and scientists to enlarge their perspectives by working with specialists in International Affairs. I expect both groups to highly benefit from this experience.

Readings

MIA students need to prepare for the course by reading the following documents available on the workshop's website

1. 'Crisis at Renault A'
2. 'Group process in Challenger case A'
3. 'Roche and Tamiflu: Doing Business in the Shadow of pandemic' (Product number: KEL349)

Assignments to be prepared before the workshop

Assignment I:

Please read: 'Crisis at Renault - Vilvoorde Plant Closing '

Please answer the following questions:

1. What are the underlying problems here ?
2. Who/What is responsible ?
3. What are the possible solutions ?
4. Evaluate Renault leadership and decision making process to-date, both in terms of the decisions reached, as well as how they were implemented and communicated

Assignment II:

Please read: 'Group Process in Challenger Launch Decision A'

Please answer the following questions:

1. How would you characterize the broader context surrounding the January 1986 teleconference?

2. How would you evaluate the group decision making process?
3. Put yourself in Roger Boisjoly's shoes. Given the context at hand, what will you actually say during this meeting, and what is the process by which you make your decision ?
4. What issues face Bob Lund? What will you actually say during this meeting if you were in his place, and what is the process by which you make your decision ?
5. How about Larry Mulloy? If you were in his place, what decision would you make and what is the process by which you arrive at that decision ?

Assignment III:

Please read: 'Roche and Tamiflu: Doing Business in the Shadow of Pandemic'

Please answer the following questions:

1. What are the main issues in the Tamiflu case ?
2. Who has an interest in these issues ?
3. Which are the public and nonpublic institutions involved ?
4. What information is available to the interests and institutions ?
5. How ethical is Roche's strategy ? What should its role be, that of a profit-maximizing entity or that of a responsible global citizen ?
6. What are the alternative strategies for Roche:
 - a. Strengthening of publicly funded research
 - b. Alternative prize models
 - c. Country by country exemptions/foreign filing license model
 - d. Alternative trading models
 - e. Others...

Please note :

It is **very important** for all participants to have read the case before the sessions. Failure to do so will limit your ability to interact with your classmates and minimize not only your personal learning, but class learning experience in general !