

Master in International Affairs (MIA)

Academic year 2009 - 2010

Decision Making and Leadership in Crisis Situations

E604 – Spring – Workshop – Decision-making and Leadership in Crisis Situations – 3 ECTS

Course Description

The objective of this intensive 2-days workshop is to introduce you to the concepts of communication when operating in a crisis atmosphere under intense scrutiny of multiple stakeholders. You will practice how to prepare and manage a crisis while communicating effectively with all stakeholders involved. You will learn that in a crisis situation, many different stakeholders or interest groups may exist, and many channels of communication exist, particularly with respect to the media. How successfully you handle your relations with the different stakeholders may make the difference between a major "public relations disaster" and enhancing your company or personal image, and your career.

> LECTURER

Fariba Hashemi, PhD
fariba.hashemi@i-aer.org

> ASSISTANT

Rachelle Cloutier
rachelle.cloutier@graduateinstitute.ch
022 908 59 48
Office: Rigot 35

Syllabus

Website

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

Description & Objectives

Using a real world case study, we will illustrate the complexity of negotiating and making decisions in a crisis situation involving multiple stakeholders from private/public sectors. Working in teams, you will be challenged to do an actual negotiation. You will receive specific feedback regarding your unique strengths and weaknesses in negotiating, and will learn that thorough preparation and effective implementation of negotiation strategy are keys to successful negotiation and communication during crisis.

Class exercises and discussions will aim at providing you with the skills and confidence to become great leaders in crisis communication and crisis management. You will challenge each other's basic assumptions and beliefs about leadership in this domain. In turn, you will be challenged to engage in an intensive reflection on your motivations, weaknesses, and strengths, and assess your reactions to conflict and uncertainty during intense crisis situations. Ultimately, you will discover how to develop, enhance and expand your talents as leaders in crisis communication.

The day at the EPFL aims to offer first-hand experience regarding how decision-making processes differ in the social and natural sciences environments. To understand these differences, MIA students will work in teams with EPFL PhD students in engineering and science.

Programme

DAY 1

Friday, March 5, 2010

8:00 AM to 12:00 PM and 12:45 PM to 4:30 PM

S2, Barton

Assignment

Please read "Group Process in the Challenger Launch Decision (A)" (HBS case study)

Please answer the following questions:

1. How would you characterize the broader context surrounding the January 1986 teleconference?
2. Put yourself in Roger Boisjoly's shoes. What will you actually say during this meeting?
3. What issues face Bob Lund? What will you actually say during this meeting if you were in his place?
4. How about Larry Mulloy? If you were in his place, what would you try to communicate and how?
5. Be prepared to role play in class!

Please note: It is **very important** for all participants to have read the case before the session. 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!

Further recommended readings for this session will be distributed in class.

DAY 2

Tuesday, March 16, 2010

10:00 AM to 6:00 PM

EPFL, Lausanne, Odyssea Building, Room -10021 (Level -1)

(See travel instructions)

Assignment

Please read "Crisis at Renault (A): The Vilvoorde Plant Closing" (IMD case study)

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 approach to-date, both in terms of the decisions reached, as well as how they were implemented and communicated.

Please note: It is **very important** for all participants to have read the case before the session. 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!

Further recommended readings for this session will be distributed in class.