
Prepare for anger, look for love: A ready reckoner for crisis scenario planners

Lynette M. McDonald, University of Queensland

John Cokley, Swinburne University of Technology

Abstract

A range of organisational crises are explored to discover how people react during a crisis and why, with a view to planning strategic actions based on those reactions. We conclude that people react, not just according to how they feel but also, less obviously, that their behaviour can be predicted using a clear understanding of those feelings. This article narrows the field of feelings, or emotions, to six categories and provides a reliable spectrum along which these emotions operate. Using this spectrum we propose a taxonomy or 'ready reckoner' of actions which individuals and organisations can take in response to these emotional reactions.ⁱ

Introduction

The nature of organisational crises, coupled with the seriousness of their impact and the likelihood that they will receive high levels of media attention, suggests the need for crisis scenario planners to reliably predict how consumers will respond to companies in crisis. Crises trigger emotions in impacted consumers which facilitate or hinder the effectiveness of crisis response strategies (Coombs & Holladay, 2005) and determine crisis behaviour, such as negative purchase and investment intent (Jorgensen, 1996) and negative word-of-mouth behaviour (McDonald, Sparks, & Glendon, 2010). In scenario planning, emotions and behaviours are normally considered as *input* variables, used as ingredients added into this plan design (Van Notten, Rotmans, Van Asselt, & Rothman, 2003). However, justification for examining expected emotional *outputs* in scenario planning is generally available in

literature on multi-criteria decision analysis (Wenstøp, 2005), emotional intelligence (Callahan, 2008), and visionary management (Malaska & Holtius, 1999: 357).

Planners have not yet fully investigated the variety, strength or impact of consumer feelings, thoughts, and behaviours that company crises generate. Yet understanding both consumers' psychological and behavioural crisis reactions is important to shape realistic crisis preparation, and for response success. In the area of strategic development of crisis management scenarios, there is an abundance of general treatments of emotions. However, researchers have only started to empirically examine consumer crisis emotion responses in the past five years (Kim & Cameron, 2011). Consequently, little attention has been paid to determining the reactions of consumers in real crisis situations. Instead, crisis studies predominantly use case study examinations or experiments. Insight into consumers' crisis reaction processes is of interest to scenario planners, crisis researchers, and public relations practitioners, in particular those combating damage to corporate reputation, as well as marketing managers dealing with plummeting sales.

Mindful of that research gap, this article presents a conceptual framework based on a review of the literature and the results of an exploratory qualitative study. First, we set out the context from scenario and crisis management literature, then present a theoretical framework using Weiner's (1986, 1995) Attribution Theory (WAT) and Situational Crisis Communication Theory (Coombs, 2007; Coombs & Holladay, 2002) which both successfully explain crisis reactions.

Next, we investigate consumers' emotional and behavioural responses to crises using eight focus groups whose participants had experienced organisational crises. Systematic coding via content analysis identified the prevalence of emotions and behaviours and patterns of subsequent emotion-linked behaviour. We suggest that a consumer-centric approach to crisis reactions is likely to offer valuable new advice for use during preparation for scenario planners, and for crisis managers. Finally, we present a speculative taxonomy of behaviours and remedial actions in a 'ready reckoner', shown in **Table 1**, below.

Literature review

Scenario planning

The unpredictable nature of organisational crises – caused more by corporate mismanagement and white collar crime as by accidents or consumer activism (Annual ICM Crisis Report, 2010) – coupled with the seriousness of their impact on consumers and the likelihood that they will receive high levels of media attention, suggests the need for scenario planners to reliably predict how consumers will respond emotionally and behaviourally to companies in crisis.

Scenario planning workshops are a strategic decision-making tool used to help a senior management team explore multiple plausible futures for the organisation and identify and select feasible and robust strategies to deal with those futures (Franco, Meadows, & Armstrong, 2012). Scenario planning “can be used to improve performance across a range of industries facing changing, uncertain futures”, and is especially useful in crisis management, for public policy makers, and as a long-range business planning tool (Bradfield, Wright, Burt, Cairns, & Van Der Heijden, 2005, pp. 796-797). Scenario planning has enjoyed a wide acceptance among practitioners and academics to support decisions when formulating strategies (Franco et al., 2012).

Faced with the unpredictable nature of the current business environment, managers routinely cope with decision-making in crisis

situations. The role of emotions in managers' intuitive decision process during crisis situations was underscored in Sayegh, Anthony, and Perrewe's (2004) conceptual model of managerial crisis decision-making. Yet much of the research has focused on managerial monitoring of personal emotions, rather than on response to others' emotions, both of which form the cornerstones of emotional intelligence (EI). Salovey and Mayer's (1990, p. 189) widely-accepted definition of EI highlights this need for emotion responsiveness as being, “The ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions”. Therefore, in a crisis situation, crisis managers need to not only monitor their own emotions, but also incorporate an awareness of the emotions elicited in those impacted by the crisis, and in formulating responses, effectively deal with the emotions generated.

Emotions and behaviours are normally considered as input variables, rather than outputs, in scenario planning (Van Notten et al., 2003). An input variable is an ingredient used to plan a scenario and how it plays out, and an output is what is expected to take place as a result. Their incorporation is sometimes studied as a characteristic of the level of integration of the scenario, that is, the extent to which components relevant to the study subject are incorporated and brought together to form a whole (Van Notten et al., 2003).

Yet an examination of real-life crises, such as the present study undertakes, demonstrates that events and developments are seldom integrated, and are often more described as “disruptive” (Van Notten et al., 2003, p. 432). Failure to predict and then incorporate emotional outcomes into strategic planning can result in the kind of “overconfidence and tunnel vision” Schoemaker (1995, p. 25) warns against even though that author did not include emotions in that 1995 study. Justification for examining expected emotional outputs in scenario planning is generally available in literature on multi-criteria decision analysis (Wenstop, 2005), emotional intelligence (Callahan, 2008), and visionary management (Malaska & Holstius, 1999).

In sum, the psychological aspects of crisis reactions have not been factored into crisis management planning (Wester, 2011), or into crisis scenario planning. Instead, crisis managers rely on stereotypical assumptions on how the public will react, paying little attention to the reactions of the public in a real crisis situation (Wester, 2011). Understanding both the organisation's assumptions and how its stakeholders might behave in a crisis helps shape its crisis preparation or response success (Pearson & Clair, 1998, cited in Alpasan, Green, & Mitroff, 2009). However, anticipating and planning for these reactions must be firmly grounded in actual situations (Wester, 2011). In order to do so, it is necessary to investigate actual consumer crisis responses.

Explaining consumer reactions

Crises typically involve and affect multiple stakeholders. The primary stakeholders in a crisis are those most directly involved (Benoit, 2004). Using a stakeholder approach to crisis management, Alpasan et al. (2009) suggested that managers' attention to stakeholders should be dependent upon the actual or potential risk or harm or injury caused by organisational decisions and actions. A group frequently negatively affected by crises is consumers.

Researchers have not taken a consumer-centric approach to determining the factors that are important in predicting consumers' reactions to crises. This creates a theoretical problem for scenario planners, and a practical problem for downstream managers seeking to develop appropriate crisis management strategies. It suggests a need to shift the research focus to a consumer-centric approach in order to understand the thoughts, feelings, and behaviours evoked as consumer responses to crises. Insight into consumers' crisis reaction processes is of interest to scenario planners, crisis researchers, and public relations practitioners, in particular those combating damage to corporate reputation, as well as marketing managers dealing with plummeting sales.

The predominant models used to investigate reactions to company crises are Weiner's (1986, 1995) attribution theory (WAT) and Coombs and Holladay's (2002) Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), based on WAT and revised by Coombs (2007). Investigations using WAT or SCCT have predominantly used experimental research to investigate consumer crisis response. Both WAT and SCCT state that, following a negative event, stakeholders make attributions about the event cause which determines the level of responsibility, eliciting emotions which, in turn, generate behaviours.

Although emotions facilitate or impede the effectiveness of crisis response strategies (Coombs & Holladay, 2005), emotion is a new crisis research frontier (Jin & Pang, 2010), with investigations predominantly examining anger and sympathy. Exceptions include the examination of *schadenfreude* (Coombs & Holladay, 2005), sadness (Jin, 2009), fear (Jin, 2009; McDonald, et al., 2010; Wester, 2011), surprise (McDonald, et al., 2010; Wester, 2011), and grief (Wester, 2011). As researchers assume that positive emotions are unlikely to occur (Wester, 2011), research on positive crisis emotions in a crisis is predominantly limited to sympathy (e.g., Coombs & Holladay, 2005; Jorgensen, 1996), although McDonald et al. (2010) investigated joy. Although Frederickson, Tugade, Waugh, and Larkin (2003) identified multiple emotional reactions to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York, no identified study has questioned consumers about the array of emotions that organisational crises elicit. There remains a strong need to explore the full variety of emotions felt by crisis-impacted consumers. This leads to the first research question:

RQ 1: What emotions do various crises evoke in consumers?

Congruent with WAT and SCCT, experiments have established that different crisis emotions elicit different behavioural responses. For example, anger predicts negative purchase intentions (e.g., Coombs & Holladay, 2007; Jorgensen, 1996), negative word-of-mouth behaviour (Coombs & Holladay, 2007; McDonald et al., 2010), and complaining

(Jorgensen, 1996; McDonald et al., 2010). Sadness creates a preference for emotional support, while fear leads to venting intentions or avoidance (Jin, 2009), complaining and negative word-of-mouth behaviour (McDonald et al., 2010). Joy predicts loyalty and negatively predicts negative word-of-mouth behaviour (McDonald et al., 2010). Sympathy may engender stronger supportive behaviour from stakeholders (Coombs & Holladay, 2005). In taking an experimental approach, these studies do not capture the potential spectrum of behavioural reactions that crises elicit from consumers. Therefore, our second research question is:

RQ 2: What behaviours do various crises evoke in consumers?

Congruent with most appraisal theories, Weiner (1986) suggests that events elicit emotions through a two-part appraisal process, with primary appraisal of the personal relevance of the event determining emotional intensity, and secondary appraisal of the negative event cause determining the experience of discrete emotions of anger and sympathy. Folkes, Koletsky, and Graham's (1987) work on product failure (missed flight) using WAT suggests that consumer anger increased with the primary appraisal of the importance of the failure. Choi and Lin's (2009) analysis of one product crisis found that highly-involved consumers were angry and attributed blame to a company. McDonald et al. (2010) found that involvement impacted five emotions: anger, fear, joy, surprise and sympathy. Yet, although Weiner (1986, 1995) cited the importance of personal relevance of an event in the attribution process, he does not include it in his model, nor is it included in the SCCT model. McDonald and Härtel (2000) suggested that involvement determines crisis outcomes, not just for those personally impacted, but if a crisis impinges on an individual's values, concerns, needs, interests, goals or beliefs. Although involvement determines emotion intensity, the role of involvement in response to a crisis is neglected. From this arises the third research question:

RQ 3: Is involvement implicated in consumers' emotion response to crises?

Method

Rather than wait opportunistically for a crisis to occur, recalled crises were investigated using eight focus groups to investigate consumers' emotional and behavioural range of responses. Focus groups provide rich, detailed information (Morgan, 1998) and are an excellent method to gain insight into a particular subject matter, especially concerns that are important to a particular audience (Lawrence & Berger, 1999).

Participants ($n = 54$) were enlisted from an east coast capital city in Australia using purposive sampling as they were required to have experienced the effects of organisational crises. Recruitment techniques included media releases submitted to metropolitan media outlets requesting participants affected by company crises. During the focus groups, in line with Zikmund's (1997) recommendations, a professional moderator established rapport and effectively channelled conversation to the areas of concern using a funnelling technique. Participants were asked to recall their emotions, who or what they were directed at, and their duration, crisis causes, and responsibility. Data was videotaped and transcribed. The analysis method selected was a quantitative approach using systematic coding via an iterative content analysis. We used an inductive method to allow patterns and themes to emerge, and established an audit trail in data collection and analysis to enhance reliability (see Miles & Huberman, 1994).

A number of taxonomies of basic emotions exist. Weiss and Cropanzano's (1996) appraisal theory, Affective Events Theory, noted Shaver, Schwartz, Kirson and O'Connor's (1987) semantic classification, which clustered 213 emotion words into six primary families of anger, fear, joy, love, sadness, and surprise. Emotions were categorised using the Shaver et al. (1987) classification. Behaviour coding was based on categories of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping behaviour described by Folkman and Lazarus (1988). Problem-focused coping aims to alter the distress-causing situation and includes rational problem-

solving techniques (e.g., creating an action plan) and confrontive strategies (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988). Emotion-focused coping behaviour is aimed at regulating distress and involves such strategies as seeking social support, distancing, avoidance, positive reappraisal, and escape-avoidance (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988). Involvement was determined via reports of a crisis personally impacting participants, via use of emphatic statements, profanities, or by identifying strong emotions (e.g., hate versus dislike).

Results

Respondents recalled 12 crises, including legionella outbreaks, an airline safety crisis, and product recalls following contamination, or after tampering and extortion. All participants had been impacted by a crisis, with most affected by several crises, including one who was involved in a class action suit after being hospitalised.

Research question 1 investigated the emotions that various crises evoke in consumers. Most participants recalled multiple emotions in response to the recalled crises. More than 80 emotion words were articulated. Two coders independently sorted the remaining 30% of emotion content in which emotion states were described, exhibiting 86% reliability when coding emotion passages into the different emotion categories. The strongest and most prevalent consumer emotion was anger, followed in decreasing prevalence by fear, sadness, joy, surprise, and love.

Participants used such anger category words as *angry*, *hate*, *disgusted*, *frustrated*, *outraged*, and *cynical*. For example, in a company extortion crisis, anger was directed at the extortionist who, according to an older male participant, was a: *'nasty creature who should be hung, drawn and quartered'*. Participants used fear category words such as *afraid*, *scared*, *worried*, *distressed*, and *horrified* in relation to themselves and those close to them. For example, in regards to a Legionella outbreak at a tourist attraction, a male participant said: *'with regards to Legionella, this is something that worries me*

because ... I was in the vicinity ... and I'm going, "shit"...'. Participants used sadness category words such as *sympathy*, *disappointed*, *sorry*, and *unhappy* when speaking of the company, or those affected by the crisis. For example, a comment expressed in regards to the extortion crisis was: *'I felt sorry for the company and I thought, I hope they catch the bastard that done it.'* In response to an airline safety crisis where the airline was seen as responsible, some positive emotions were related to *schadenfreude*: *'seeing their name go through the mud,'* or else relief as: *'I'm glad it's happened. They are grounded and we'll be safe.'* Participants used surprise category words such as *surprise*, *shock*, *amazement*, or *unsurprised*. For one gas plant crisis which left the city without natural gas for cooking and heating, surprise was related to the unexpected explosion of the gas plant and loss of an essential product. As one said: *'I was taken by surprise ... you don't expect to wake up in the morning and go, "something's blown up".'* Participants used love category words such as *liking*, *compassion*, *fond*, and *love*. For the airline safety crisis, where the crisis was seen as a 'beat-up' by a government agency and the media, participants used a high number of love words, with a general fondness directed at the company because, *'airlines in Australia are as good as it gets'*.

Participants frequently recalled several emotions for each crisis. Participants estimated that their emotions ranged in duration from transient states to a permanent, enduring condition. As one male participant said: *'I'll always feel that way.'*

Participants directed emotion at two distinct groups: those considered responsible for the crisis or its effects, and those impacted by the crisis. Those held responsible for the crises, and targets of negatively-valenced emotions, were predominantly companies and their managers. Those also considered responsible, but external to the organisation, were state and federal governments and their agents, the media, and extortionists. Those impacted by crises and the targets of positively valenced emotions included the company and its employees as victims, one's social group, the general public

(e.g., the elderly and sick), unions, and employees used as scapegoats.

Research question 2 considered the behaviours that crises evoked with behaviour coded as problem-focused or emotion-focused coping behaviour. A total of 13 behaviours were identified, both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping behaviour, but predominantly emotion-focused, with boycott and avoidance being common responses.

Crisis-specific behaviours (e.g., returning products, using alternate facilities in the gas crisis) were coded as problem-focused as these behaviours involve rational problem-solving techniques. Behaviours coded as both emotion- and problem-focused were information searches using the Internet, newspapers, government departments, the companies involved and store staff, which included seeking advice on alternate products. Behaviours categorised as emotion-focused aimed at regulating distress were word-of-mouth behaviour (e.g., discussions with family and friends), boycotts or encouraging others to boycott the company, product avoidance, buying alternate brands, reduced product usage, complaining to a government department or authority, to the media, to the company, taking legal action, and inaction (e.g., continued product use). Boycott or avoidance actions were reported by 20 of the 54 participants, with some enduring boycotts and avoidance actions reported. Boycotts were associated with anger and targeted the company involved in a major food contamination and product recall, while avoidance action appeared to be fear-driven and concerned organisations affected by a legionella outbreak.

Research question 3 considered whether crisis involvement was implicated in consumers' emotion response. There was the expectation that, as involvement refers to how personally relevant an event is to an individual and determines emotional intensity, it could be detected via reports of a crisis personally affecting participants, via emphatic statements or profanities, or by identifying strong emotions. This was evident

in some, but not all, cases. Several participants indicated that they considered a negative event to be a crisis when it personally affected either themselves or their family, particularly their health and wellbeing. For example, in referring to the product tampering, one male participant: *'when things can impact your children you just get a lot more angry about it, and a lot more potentially upset.'* However, some participants were outraged by crises that had not personally impacted them, but instead impacted their values, an innate sense of "what's right". For example, in one crisis, substantial anger was directed at the company for scapegoating employees. As one female explained: *'There's degrees of severity and degrees of impact on you personally or your conscience. Or you may not be impacted personally and still your intention to purchase or deal with the company may be influenced by that or (by the) experiences of others.'*

Discussion

This study identified a broader range of emotions and behaviours than had been previously identified using WAT or SCCT.

Crises evoked a full array of consumer emotions, not just anger and sympathy as posited by WAT. Many participants recalled a variety of emotions felt towards the company and its product. Negative emotions were directed at those considered responsible for the crisis, and positive emotions towards those impacted by the crisis. Congruent with Weiner (1995), emotions have been expanded from WAT's anger and sympathy to include a variety of emotions: strongest and most prevalent is *anger*, followed in decreasing strength and prevalence by *fear*, *sadness*, *joy*, *surprise*, and *love*. Although emotions are generally considered to be a temporary affective state, several participants reported enduring post-crisis feelings.

Participants recalled a wide variety of behaviours, many of which had not been previously examined in crisis literature. They were: (1) word-of-mouth behaviour (e.g., discussions with family and friends; encouraging others to boycott the company), (2) boycotts (stopped purchase, anger-based)

(3) product avoidance (stopped purchase, fear-based), (4) buying alternate brands, (5) reduced product usage, (6) complaining to a government department or authority, (7) complaining to the media, (8) complaining to the company, (9) taking legal action, (10) inaction (continued product use), (11) information searches [Internet, newspapers, government departments, the companies involved and store staff, which included seeking advice on alternate products] (12) returning products and (13) using alternate facilities. These behaviours were categorised as either emotion-focused or problem-focused (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988). Emotion-focused behaviour, such as talking over the crisis with family members, reduces the stress involved in dealing with a crisis, while problem-focused behaviour allows participants to deal with crisis practicalities, such as returning the product involved in a recall.

Involvement, rather than merely the degree of personal importance, is implicated in crisis response, and values can activate involvement, congruent with McDonald and Härtel's (2000) contention that involvement is triggered, not just for those personally impacted, but when a crisis impinges on an individual's values, concerns, needs, interests, goals or beliefs.

Limitations

Despite producing rich data, focus groups have limitations. This study was exploratory using a small sample, so that data were context-bound. The general population sample self-selected mainly in response to study publicity so there may have been demand characteristics: i.e. participants may have participated in the study because they had experienced, and therefore reported, strong reactions. There is also the issue of internal consistency, with some participants adjusting their position after interacting with others, as seen in the case of the natural gas crisis.

Conclusions and implications

This study applies attribution theory to company crises in order to understand better how consumers react to company crises and what to do with that understanding. It presents a conceptual framework, supported by the results of eight focus groups, for further examination of the consumer response process.

Congruent with McDonald and Härtel's (2000) suggestion, when consumers experience a crisis (including the re-experience which follows crisis reminder cues) their involvement level can be activated, depending upon whether the crisis has impacted on them or their family and friends personally, or else impacted on their beliefs and values. This involvement might be a more appropriate construct to apply to company crises than personal importance or personal relevance because it taps into consumers' concerns, needs, values, interests, goals, and beliefs.

We find that crises elicit (a) a range of six emotions, (b) 13 separate behaviours and (c) that involvement may be implicated in emotion response.

The strongest and most prevalent consumer emotion identified was (1) anger, followed in decreasing strength and prevalence by (2) fear, (3) sadness, (4) joy, (5) surprise and (6) love. This may be the first study that uncovered feelings categorised as love. Love is almost undetectable in many situations, but appears linked to crises that are external to, and uncontrollable by, the organisation. The intensity of language, intonation, and use of profanities indicated that participants did not just recall emotions, but re-experienced them when discussing crises. This is supported by the James-Lange (1890, cited in Levine, Prohaska, Burgess, Rice, & Laulhere, 2001) theory of emotion which argues that emotion can be triggered as easily by memory of an event as by its direct perception. Although emotions are widely viewed as temporary affective states (e.g., Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), this "re-experiencing effect" when recalling crises or when reminded of crises may go some way towards explaining on-going boycott and avoidance actions, continued years after the original crisis.

Thirteen main resultant behaviours were identified and the strongest behaviour, boycott, was tied to the strongest emotion, anger. Avoidant behaviours were tied to fear, and some of these behaviours were reported as continuous, accentuated by fresh media reports acting as reminder cues, temporarily reactivating the attribution-emotion-behaviour process. The extent that this occurs, and whether this re-experience means that emotions may be re-constructed on the spot (as some researchers suggest) is not known.

In discussing the patterns of emotion-linked behaviour, we argue that there is scope for categorisation of the identified behaviours according to their key driver: emotional or problem-solving. We tabulated this categorisation of behaviours to create a speculative list of remedial actions that organisations could apply.

We speculate that such a categorisation would result in a configuration such as shown in **Table 1** (the ready reckoner, below), which suggests possible managerial response during crises.

Recommendations for further research

Taking this consumer-centric approach to crisis reactions is likely to offer valuable new advice for use during preparation for scenario planners. Its application in crisis scenario planning may provide further understanding

of the repercussions of consumer emotions, and thus enhance crisis management, especially in developing crisis communications.

Reminder cues might reignite the involvement process, resulting in a re-experience of dominant crisis emotions. Since emotion may be reconstructed in view of later attributions (Levine et al., 2001) this might mean that later media reports, especially those assigning blame to the company, might reignite the consumer reaction process, perhaps resulting in the revision of attributions, emotions, and behaviours. For managers, where the original crisis elicited negative emotions, there may be a future consumer backlash when fresh reports appear later. The extent to which this occurs, and whether this re-experience means that emotions are reconstructed on the spot (as some researchers suggest), could be usefully researched. For scenario planners, this may provide the opportunity to plan scenarios incorporating these crisis emotions, or else planning scenarios which may help to tap into dormant emotions.

Further experimental design could test the main constructs identified using a large general population sample to increase generalisability and validity. Future investigation and confirmation of the ready reckoner is likely to provide further understanding of the repercussions of consumer emotions in business planning, and thus enhanced crisis management, especially communications.

Table 1: Speculative categorisation of behaviours and possible remedial actions - **The ready reckoner**

<i>Scale of involvement of participant</i>	<i>Emotion-based behaviour linked to responsibility</i>	Possible management response	<i>Aim of response</i>	<i>Problem-focused behaviour linked to accountability</i>	Possible management response	<i>Emotional aim of response</i>
Operator inserts figure from 1-10 (1 is min, 10 is max) to determine the strength of response needed	Word-of-mouth behaviour	Company outreach to community groups (stakeholder engagement)	Reduce 'fear' and 'sadness'	Boycotts	Pre-emptive product recall + stakeholder engagement	Promote 'joy' (= relief)
	Reduced product usage	Brand extension (advertising different uses for the product likely to mitigate this feature)	Promote 'surprise'	Returning products	Provide and promote a third-party store-front to facilitate this for consumers	Promote 'surprise' and 'joy', distance brand from 'fear' and 'anger'
	Complaining to a government department or authority	Proactive communication with department or authority to pre-empt and mitigate complaints	Distance brand from 'fear' and 'anger'	Product avoidance	Post-recall 'new product launch' [e.g. in the case of paracetamol poisoning, release of new range with tamper-evident packaging]	Promote 'surprise'
	Complaining to the media	Proactive communication with media to pre-empt and mitigate complaints, emphasising actions in Column 4	Promote 'joy' (= relief)	Buying alternate brands	Emphasis on previous brand loyalty	Promote 'love'
	Inaction			Taking legal action	Establish a department which can deal at arm's length with litigants	Distance brand from 'fear' and 'anger'
				Complaining to the company	Provide and promote a third-party store-front to facilitate this for consumers	Promote 'surprise' and 'joy'
				Information searches		Distance brand from 'fear' and 'anger'
				Using alternate facilities	Variation on brand extension (advertising different ways consumers can meet their service needs)	Promote 'surprise' and 'joy'

References

- Alpaskan, C. M., Green, S. E., & Mitroff, I. I. (2009). Corporate governance in the context of crises: towards a stakeholder theory of crisis management. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 17(1), 38-49.
- Annual ICM Crisis Report 2010. *Institute for Crisis Management* (2011, May). Retrieved from <http://www.crisisexperts.com/>
- Benoit, W. L. (2004). Image restoration discourse and crisis communication. In D. P. Millar & R. L. Heath (Eds.), *Responding to crisis: A rhetorical approach to crisis communication* (pp. 263-280). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Bradfield, R., Wright, G., Burt, G., Cairns, G., & Van Der Heijden, K. (2005). The origins and evolution of scenario techniques in long range business planning. *Futures*, 37, 795-812.
- Callahan, J. L. (2008). The four C's of emotion: A framework for managing emotions in organisations. *The Organisation Development Journal*, 26(2), 33-38.
- Choi, Y. & Lin, Y. (2009). Consumer response to crisis: Exploring the concept of involvement in Mattel product recalls. *Public Relations Review*, 35, 18-22.
- Coombs, W. T. (2007). Protecting organisation reputation during a crisis: The development and application of Situational Crisis Communication Theory. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 10, 63-176.
- Coombs, W. T. & Holladay, S. J. (2002). Helping crisis managers protect reputational assets. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 16, 165-186.
- Coombs, W. T. & Holladay, S. J. (2005). An exploratory study of stakeholder emotions: Affect and crises. In N. Ashkanasy, W. J. Zerbe, & C. E. J. Härtel (Eds.), *The effect of affect in organisational settings: Research on emotion in organisations*, pp. 263-280. New York: Elsevier.
- Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2007). The negative communication dynamic: Exploring the impact of stakeholder affect on behavioural intentions. *Journal of Communication Management*, 11(4), 300-312.
- Folkes, V., Koletsky, S., & Graham, J. (1987). A field study of causal inferences and consumer reaction: A view from the airport. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 13, 534-539.
- Folkman, S. & Lazarus, R. S. (1988). The relationship between coping and emotion: Implications for theory and research. *Social Science and Medicine*, 26, 309-317.
- Franco, L. A., Meadows, M. & Armstrong, S. J. (2012). Exploring individual differences in scenario planning workshops. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, in press.
- Frederickson, B. L., Tugade, M. M., Waugh, C. E. & Larkin, G. R. (2003). What good are positive emotions in crises? A prospective study of resilience and emotions following the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11th, 2001. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 84(2), 365-376.
- Jin, Y. (2009). The effects of public's cognitive appraisal of emotions in crises on crisis coping and strategy assessment. *Public Relations Review*, 35(3), 310-313.
- Jin, Y., & Pang, A. (2010). Future directions of crisis communication research: Emotions in crisis – the next frontier. In T. W. Coombs, & S. J. Holladay (Eds.), *The handbook of crisis communication* (pp. 677-690). Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Jorgensen, B. K. (1996). Components of consumer reaction to company-related mishaps: A structural equation model approach. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 23, 346-351.
- Kim, H. J. & Cameron, G. T. (2011). Emotions matter in crisis: The role of anger and sadness in the publics' response to crisis news framing and corporate crisis response. *Communication Research*, 38(6), 826-855.
- Lawrence, J. & Berger, P. (1999). Let's hold a focus group. *Direct Marketing*, 61(12), 40-43.
- Levine, L. J., Prohaska, V., Burgess, S. L., Rice, J. A., & Lulhere, T. M. (2001). Remembering past emotions: The role of current appraisals. *Cognition and Emotion*, 15, 393-417.

- Malaska, P. & Holstius, K. (1999). Visionary management. *Foresight*, 1(4), 353-361.
- McDonald, L., & Härtel, C. E. J. (2000). Applying the involvement construct to organisational crises. *Proceedings of the Australian and New Zealand Marketing Academy Conference Gold Coast, Australia*.
- McDonald, L. M., Sparks, B., & Glendon, I. A. (2010). Stakeholder reactions to company crisis communication and causes. *Public Relations Review*, 36(3), 263-271.
- Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications.
- Morgan, D. L. (1998). *The focus group guidebook: Focus group kit 1*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, 9, 185-211.
- Sayegh, L., Anthony, W. P., & Perrewe, P. L. (2004). Managerial decision-making under crisis: the role of emotion in an intuitive decision process. *Human Resource Management Review*, 14, 179-199.
- Schoemaker, P. J.H. (1995). Scenario planning: A tool for strategic thinking. *Sloan Management Review*, 36(2) 25-39.
- Shaver, P., Schwartz, J., Kirson, D., & O'Connor, C. (1987). Emotion knowledge: Further exploration of a prototype approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 52, 1061-1086.
- Van Notten, P., Rotmans, J., Van Asselt, M., & Rothman, Dale (2003). An updated scenario typology. *Futures*, 35, 423-443.
- Weiner, B. (1986). *An attributional theory of motivation and emotion*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Weiner, B. (1995). *Judgments of responsibility*. New York: The Guildford Press.
- Weiss, H. M., & Cropanzano, R. (1996). Affective events theory: A theoretical discussion of the structure, causes and consequences of affective experiences at work. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 18, 1-74.
- Wenstøp, F. (2005). Mindsets, rationality and emotion in multi-criteria decision analysis. *Journal of Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis*, 13, 161-172.
- Wester, M. (2011). Fight, flight or freeze: Assumed reactions of the public during a crisis. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, 19(4), 207-214.
- Zikmund, W. G. (1997). *Business research methods* (5th ed.). Fort Worth: The Dryden Press, Harcourt Brace College Publishers.

Author contact details:

Lynette M. McDonald PhD, Public Relations lecturer, School of Journalism and Communication, University of Queensland. Phone: (07) 3346 8293. Email: lyn.mcdonald@uq.edu.au

John Cokley PhD, Associate Professor in Journalism, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne. jcokley@swin.edu.au,

Copyright statement:

The authors of this article have elected, in the interests of open dissemination of scholarly work, to provide this article to you in open access format. This means that, in accordance with the principles of the Budapest Open Access Initiative (<http://www.soros.org/openaccess/>), you may freely copy and redistribute this article provided you correctly acknowledge its authors and source, and do not alter its contents.

ⁱ This research was summarised and presented in a short paper at the World Public Relations Forum (<http://worldprforum.com/>) in Melbourne, November 2012. Both authors have agreed to this submission to *PRism* and this version takes into account comments from the current refereeing process at *PRism*.