Running Head: COURSE PROJECT

Course Project on NAPALI

By

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COM 620- Crisis Communications & Management

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**I. Introduction**

The National American Pacific Islander Leadership Institute, commonly known as NAPALI, is in the process of major change within its ranks. Since its inception over a decade ago, the leaders of the organization, known and respected in the communities across the Pacific Rim as Kupunas, are rapidly approaching their 80th birthdays. While it is a fact that if Polynesians are able to reach this advanced age, they often live for another ten or twenty years. However, in anticipation that this may not be true in their case, the organization feels strongly that they need a structured crisis communication plan in place in order to prepare their community for their demise. Throughout this paper, I am going to talk about the key players within the current NAPALI organization, how these people operate in and around current crises, and also to what extent changes could be made in preparation for an emerging crisis.

**II. Body**

**Organization’s Background and History**

The National Pacific American Leadership Institute (NAPALI) is having a very successful year, recruiting and training more American Pacific Islanders to be leaders than it has done in the past. NAPALI has a long history of successful turnout: 13 years of Leadership Programs with no attrition (dropouts), resulting in the graduation of 179 American Pacific Islander Fellows. These “Fellows” are made up of individuals from all over the Pacific Rim whose main goal is to preserve their native culture and values for future generations. NAPALI has a unique niche in the community of American Pacific Islanders due to the lack of culture based leadership programs, local and abroad. The prosperity that they are experiencing today could not be expected years ago when the Board of Directors spoke with Peter Drucker, the business management guru. Drucker’s position in helping the organization really influenced the current methods of mass communication/business to rally others in the NAPALI community around a common goal. This goal is still seen today in preserving the cultural ties and values at the core of the Pacific Rim societies. NAPALI graduates are highly respected in their own communities and within the larger continental United States. This organization, NAPALI, has been supported in the past by a single non-profit funding source: The Geneva Foundation. As NAPALI transitions from a single Foundation’s support (The Geneva Foundation) to its own non-profit organization, this will present new challenges, as well as opportunities, for grant writing and local community support.

NAPALI’s main goal and purpose is to convey the message of preserving and perpetuating the traditions and cultures of leaders in American Pacific Islander communities. This will allow them to prepare future Fellows to help their communities survive in a global society. NAPALI is the only leadership program that gives full scholarships to its participants for travel, lodging, food, and graduation. This organization has totally relied in the past on word of mouth for communication: this means that NAPALI has no advertising budget. NAPALI offers full scholarships to anyone in their target audience who are interested in the week-long program. Most other organizations require participants to “cost share” the expenses because the other organizations are colleges, universities, and private schools. By taking the financial pressure off the Fellows, they are better able to focus their energies on the cultural activities of the leadership program. Most other organizations have a budget specifically allocated to advertising. This is not the case with NAPALI because using the Fellows as the sole source of communication allows for more effective dialogue, which then in turn inspires the new Fellows to want to become NAPALI leaders.

**Stakeholder Analysis**

Internal - Primary Stakeholders information

Creating a list of all key players in the internal structure of the NAPALI organization is important because it will make it easier to draw up a crisis communication plan. All information listed below is important because they make up the organization for NAPALI from the bottom level up. Below is a detailed list of individuals who make up the internal structure of NAPALI:

1. Board of Directors- Chairman and 5 other Kupunas

Demographics

1. Male and female
2. Mostly elderly
3. Income from middle class to upper class
4. Partially to fully educated
5. Respected to the highest degree within their own communities

Psychographics

1. Conservatives - This means that they are traditionalists in their values and passionate about maintaining/spreading their cultural to others in the Island Communities
2. Those who had or may still have close connections with many inside the Island Communities

Lifestyles

1. Retired individuals
2. Travels frequently
3. Executive Director- One individual: Heather Minton

Demographics

1. Female
2. Elderly - 74 Years of Age
3. Upper class
4. Fully educated
5. Respected to the highest degree within their own communities

Psychographics

1. Conservatives/Traditionalist
2. Close connections with many people inside the Island Communities and strong ties to the NAPALI Board of Directors

Lifestyles

1. Retired
2. Travels frequently
3. Regional Leaders - 2 people (In Hawaii: Abe Correia; In San Diego: Vern Miranda)

Demographics

1. Male
2. Middle age to elderly
3. Middle class
4. Partially educated
5. Respected to the highest degree within their own communities

Psychographics

1. Conservatives/Traditionalist
2. Close connections with many people inside the Island Communities and strong ties to the NAPALI Board of Directors

Lifestyles

1. Active
2. Vern Miranda: Retired; Abe Correia: Not Retired
3. Travels frequently
4. “The Leadership Program Fellows (179 graduates) are comprised of Native Hawaiians (85 individuals), American Samoans (39 individuals), Chamorros (18 individuals), and Tongans (20 individuals)” (NAPALI Foundation Report 2007, p. 5)

Demographics

1. Male or female
2. Usually between the ages of 30-50
3. Income close to poverty level
4. Partially educated
5. Those highly respected within their own community

Psychographics

1. Conservatives/Traditionalists
2. Regard their place in the community to be second to their place in a church choice
3. Ambitious innovators
4. Those who are easily able to make relationships with others
5. Those who can understand the value of money and project costs after training

Lifestyle

1. Parents with many children
2. College students
3. Individuals who live directly on the beaches
4. Ambitious innovators
5. Traditionalists
6. Conservatives

External - Secondary Stakeholders

The External audience is important because any time an issue or event affects more than the primary audience, it is these people who are impacted by the outcomes. Below is a detailed list of all external stakeholders to NAPALI:

1. Business Vendors
2. Transportation
3. Lodging
4. Catering
5. Parish Churches
6. Community Centers
7. City Offices and Agencies
8. College and Universities
9. Media:
10. Newspapers
11. TV (Free Press)- If they can get it
12. Radio (Public Service Announcements)
13. General Public
14. Future generations of Fellows - future American Pacific Islanders from across the Pacific Rim who attend the workshops in the NAPALI cultural leadership program. There are many Polynesians within the community at large that NAPALI is trying to recruit and reach including:

Demographics

1. Male or female
2. Usually between the ages of 30-50
3. Income close to poverty level
4. Partially educated
5. Those highly respected within their own community

Psychographics

1. Conservatives/Traditionalists
2. Regard their place in the community to be second to their place in a church
3. Ambitious innovators
4. Those who are easily able to make relationships with others
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Lifestyle

1. Parents with many children
2. College students
3. Individuals who live directly on the beaches
4. Ambitious innovators
5. Traditionalists
6. Conservatives

**Risk & Issues Assessment**

NAPALI is trying to reach out and recruit future Fellows from across the entire Pacific Rim. With such a wide spread geographical landscape to cover, there are many risks that may present themselves in current and future times. Here is a detailed list of the possible risks and issues which could potentially threaten NAPALI:

Transportation **–** This is a very big which faces the organization and at any time could pose a crisis for the organization as a whole. Without transportation, future Fellows will not be able to travel and receive the training which NAPALI has to offer. Specific transportation issues which could occur include:

1. Heightened airport security in the United States resulting in travel visas being revoked;
2. Limited amounts of travel routes in and out of certain areas within the Islands;
3. Car and boating accidents which may result in the loss of human life;
4. With currency exchange and inflation, cost of travel on foreign airlines may go up thus resulting in prohibitive expenses which NAPALI cannot afford to pay.

Working with Minors **-** NAPALI also works with younger individuals, seeking out leadership qualities in individuals long before they may become current Fellows. This means that it is possible that NAPALI could be working with a percentage of minors at any given time. Working with minors holds many liabilities and could become a crisis if ever neglected or not thoroughly monitored by the Executive Director. Specific issues which could occur when working with minors include:

1. Inadequate background checks: This may result in people with felonies or sex offenses working closely with young adults;
2. A lack of cultural insensitivity: In Polynesian cultures, young girls ages 11-16 are often promiscuous because in their culture, they have to have a baby before they can be married. A scandal could occur if these young girls are looking for biological fathers;
3. Transporting minors without the parents’ permission could result in legal action, as well as minors transporting other minors.

Going out after they have been trained - Another potential problem because it is NAPALI’s leadership and guidance alone which facilitates the message they are trying to spread to areas around the Pacific Rim. It is possible that the Fellows may misunderstand the message that NAPALI wants it to spread, distracting the audience about what the organization is really trying to accomplish:

1. Misrepresentation of certain modules in the leadership program could result in promises or expectations that NAPALI may not be able to fulfill;
2. Fellows who have been “trained” may speak one of forty different indigenous languages resulting in miscommunication between Fellows, peers, and new audiences.

Economic Disaster **-** A very serious problem in the next few years, as their funding has been cut off for the upcoming year of 2011. Just having received their 501C3 status as a non-profit, it is their challenge now to strategize how to keep the organization alive and thriving in this harsh economic time:

1. Writing grants is going to be one of their highest priorities to receive funding. However if the grants misrepresent NAPALI’s vision it is possible that there will be no funds to use.
2. As the Kupunas begin to pass away, those in and around the community who donate money to the organization may reconsider the importance of NAPALI’s message because the original donations were the results of friendship or gifts to those elders.

Employment Issues - It is true that many people within the community feel the need to work with the NAPALI organization to spread its message; however most of the volunteers will not be able to survive without payments for their efforts because:

1. If NAPALI cannot support their expanding leadership base with stipends or honorariums to current Fellows, it is likely there could be a high turnover in volunteers.
2. Without stipends or honorariums to the current Fellows, future Fellows may lose interest in becoming current Fellows.

**Media Analysis**

Any organization should maintain good relationships with outside media sources and their representatives who are contacted before, during, and after a crisis develops which affects any branch of the secondary stakeholders. Having strong media relations is not only important to the organization, it is vital for its survival in crisis situations. Organizations that have strong relationships with media sources are more likely to turn a crisis situation into an opportunity. Only the Spokesperson for NAPALI will interface with outside media sources because this person has been trained specifically in this field for Crisis Management. In Appendix E of the CCP Plan, I provide a detailed list of media NAPALI should keep informed of any important events.

**Crisis Communication Plan Overview & Summary (CCP)**

It is of primary importance for everyone within the NAPALI organization to show respect at all times to their constituents. In the Crisis Communication Plan within this document, this respect has now been extended to handling a crisis of losing a key member of the Board of Directors through death. Insuring that the message about their loss is versed in terms that respect their Polynesian identity and values, this highly structured Crisis Communication Plan outlines the assignments and responsibilities of each team member; it also includes strategies for handling this crisis on an external level for community stakeholders, the media, and NAPALI Fellows.

**III. Conclusion**

Drawing connections to facilitate the inevitable crisis of losing key Board Members due to death, this Crisis Communication Plan brings together the expertise of eight professionals as an effective Crisis Management Team. The assignments and responsibilities of each team member provide a timely method for controlling the flow of internal and external information directly related to the crisis. In addition, the Crisis Management Team is culturally sensitive to the ceremonies and traditions of the American Pacific Islanders as a community across a wide geographical area. After each crisis, the team will conduct a thorough assessment to evaluate their effectiveness in handling the multiple levels of the situation; and updates to the plan will be approved annually, if necessary, by the NAPALI Board of Directors.

**IV. References**

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**V. Appendix**

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**NAPALI Leadership Program**

**Crisis Communications Plan**

**Date Created: 10/20/2010**

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# Purpose of the Plan:

At the current time an organization named NAPALI, located in the Pacific Rim, is on the verge of a major crisis that could ultimately affect politically and socially how Leadership Programs operate around the Pacific Islands. To be specific, the Board of Directors also known as Kupunas, who are highly respected elders within the community, are dying off in a increased number. For the purpose of this paper, it is important to be prepared for the extent of the Kupunas’ demise and its impact on the organization as a whole. With the death of the Kupunas comes the real possibility that the organization’s reputation could be at a loss. However, this may not be the case if a strong crisis communication plan is created, formed, maintained, and facilitated in and around all members apart of the organization.

# Plan Objectives:

1. To assemble a crisis communications team that will review and analyze the need for specific responses and actions.
2. To disseminate quarterly information about the health and active status of each Board Member.
3. To create a specific guide that documents a backup plan for replacement of a Board Member within 24 hours.

# Readiness Preparation:

1. **Inventory of potential crisis and public relations vulnerabilities:**

The Board of Directors votes to set up a text message telephone tree system to coordinate team assignments and responsibilities to address the potential crisis and public relations vulnerabilities of the death of a key voting Board Member

1. **Makeup of the Crisis Management Team:**

* Team Leader
* Financial Director
* Legal Representative
* Security Director
* Risk Manager
* Communications Specialist
* Human Resources Representative
* Security Specialist or Consultant

1. **Team Assignments and Responsibilities:**

According to Podolak (2002) people involved in an effective Crisis Management Team would include:

*Team Leader***-** This individual leads the team because he/she is the main authority before, during, and after a crisis. Among their many responsibilities, it is the team leader who is responsible for forming and maintaining the team with integrity and intelligent decisions.

*Financial Director***-** This individual is on the team because money is very important in every crisis. As events unfold within a crisis, financial obligations or repayments may need to be considered and negotiated. It is this individual’s responsibility before, during, and after the crisis to monitor the financial scope of the organization’s funds, as well as to frequently report on crisis costs and payments with the team leader.

*Legal Representative***-** This individual is important in the event a crisis gets out of hand, to the point that one or many of the team members are blamed for furthering the crisis, mishandling it, or mishandling their job incorrectly. A legal representative defends the organization in all affairs, including court cases, councils, or meetings with outsiders to the company.

*Security Director***-** This individual is important because he/she is responsible setting up and coordinating emergency response teams if a crisis were to unfold. During a crisis, this individual is the main communicator with the emergency response teams, including police officers, hospitals, EMT’s, firepersons, etc.

*Risk Manager***-** This individual is important because he/she must remain in good contact with insurance agencies, analyze how much the crisis impact could cost the company, and prepare to have those funds at disposal to cover a potential crisis. It is this individual’s responsibility to communicate effectively with the financial director and the security director, because these two team members have the most influence on this job’s objective.

*Communications Specialist (AKA Public Relations Specialist)***-** This individual is on the team to correctly gather, collate, and disseminate information to the public when necessary, without drawing further spectacle to the organization’s part in the crisis. He/she must be ready to field a variety of questions which the media/public may ask; this individual is indeed a key player and voice of the organization in a crisis.Due to this, a communications specialist should be aware 24/7 of everything that is going on in the crisis situation, within and outside the company at all times.

*Human Resources Representative-*This individual is important because he/she is the main link between the employees and the upper management of the organization. This individual is responsible for overseeing, analyzing, and evaluating the performance of all employees within the infrastructure of the organization to reduce any problems which may or could occur in a crisis.

*Security Specialist or Consultant-*This individual is important because he/she is responsible for overseeing security risks and related issues before and during a crisis. This person must be able to envision different scenarios of how a crisis could unfold and then relay that the information before hand to all employee staff and the company’s security team. When a crisis breaks out, this individual must then work directly with the Security Director and the main Team Leader to contain scenarios as they occur in the crisis situation. (p. 54-57)

1. **Locations of the Emergency Operations Centers**

Location, contact number, and supplies table (See Appendix A)

* Honolulu, Hawaii
* Seattle, Washington
* San Diego, California

# Response:

1. **Assessment Procedures**

Emergency Phone Tree Log: (See Appendix B)

Assessment will focus on:

* Availability of the first response individual
* Timeliness of the response
* Accuracy of the information contained within the response
* Awareness of the impact the media will have in using the response information

1. **Designation of a Spokesperson or Spokespersons:**

The Board of Directors will vote on approval of a designated Spokesperson based upon his/her prior qualifications and experience in handling emergency crisis situations and the media.

1. **Internal Communications**

The Team Leader (Executive Director) will be responsible for disseminating and controlling the flow of internal information directly related to the crisis.

1. **External Communications**

The Team Leader will work closely with the Spokesperson to handle the external communications. This may include:

* Press Release
* Television or Radio Sound bites
* An announcement on the NAPALI website

1. **Rumor Control**

The Communications Specialist will gather, analyze, and correctly interpret the crisis information for all stake holders inside and outside the organization for rumor control.

1. **Response Activity Checklist**

* Notification
* Family Member of deceased Board Director notifies NAPALI’s Executive Director who is also the Team Leader of the NAPALI Crisis Management Team.
* Crisis Communication Team
* Team Leader and Communications Specialist convene to discuss strategies for rumor control.
* Before Going Public
* Team Leader meets with the Financial Director to review finances to maintain good will within the Polynesian Community.
* Team Leader offers condolences to family of deceased Board Member and with assistance in any funeral expenses.
* Team Leader arranges for Polynesian ceremony to honor the deceased Board Member.
* Spokesman meets with the Communications Specialist and Team Leader to discuss current developments and timeline of all activities related to the demise of the Board Member and the election of the new candidate as a replacement Board Member.
* Team Leader meets with the members of the Crisis Communications Team to determine which assignments and responsibilities are now open for selecting new candidate or candidates to sit on the Board.
* Going Public
* Spokesperson will deliver to all appropriate media channels the preapproved press release announcing the demise of the Board Member. (See Appendix C)
* Spokesperson will encourage community members to share their memories about the deceased Board Member in an area on the organization’s website.
* The Crisis Management Team will monitor the responses from the public and use the information in their own area of responsibility to contain any further crisis development. (See Appendix D)
* Personal responses from the website will be passed along to the family members of the deceased Board Member.
* Frequent updates on funeral arrangements and post funeral ceremonies to honor the deceased Board Member will be given to the press and posted on the organization’s website.
* There will be no public mention of financial assistance for funeral or post funeral costs.
* Limited information will be given to the press regarding the full responsibilities of the deceased Board Member.

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# Follow Up:

As a courtesy to the family members of the deceased Board Member, the Communications Specialist and the Human Resource Representative will share the responsibility for sending out letters to current Fellows who have shared their memories about the deceased Board Member on the NAPALI website.

Since the media is primarily an avenue of dissemination to reach as large of an audience, as quickly as possible, for funeral and honorary ceremonies, there is no need to send formal “Thank You’s” to TV and radio stations. Instead, a press release will be sent to all Polynesian community newspapers acknowledging appreciation for the entire community’s attention and response to the crisis.

Rumor Control

* The Communications Specialist will monitor any entries on the website concerning comments about potential new candidates for the future replacement of the Board Member.
* Any rumors will be discussed amongst the Crisis Management Team to ensure integrated communication about the accuracy of the information and its potential impact upon the organization.

Post- Mortem Meetings(s)

* After the funeral and honorary ceremonies are over, the Spokesperson will release the announcement for a replacement Board Member including qualifications, assignments, responsibilities, and necessary experience in community outreach.
* The Crisis Management Team will meet to conduct a thorough assessment of all activities during the past crisis to evaluate their effectiveness in handling the multiple levels of the situation.
* The Crisis Management Team will assess the loss within the organization as a result of the demise of the Board Member.
* The Crisis Management Team will brainstorm ways to make any issues within this crisis a learning experience for everyone in the organization.

Plan Update

* The Board of Directors will review the Crisis Communications Plan at their annual board meetings and approve new protocols which may have not been addressed fully in this version.
* Any consequences resulting from the crisis will be viewed as lessons learned; the Crisis Management Team will develop a revised version of this Crisis Communications Plan in response to lessons learned.

# Appendix A: Emergency Operations Center Information Table

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **Location** | **Contact Number** | **Supplies** |
| Honolulu, HI | Sacred Heart, Waianae | (808) 696-3773 | Polynesian Food for Ceremonies; Kapa Cloth for Hawaiians deceased or Tapa Cloth for other Polynesian deceased. (To be given as gifts to the family members of the deceased Board Member. |
| San Diego, CA | San Diego Mission De Alcala | (619) 283-7319 | \*Same as above in Honolulu |
| Seattle, WA | St. James Cathedral | (206) 622-3559 | \*Same as above in Honolulu |

# Appendix B: Emergency Phone Tree Log

Internal Use Only

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Team Member** | **Name** | **Cell Phone** | **Email Address** |
|  | Team Leader |  |  |  |
|  | Financial Director |  |  |  |
|  | Legal Representative |  |  |  |
|  | Security Director |  |  |  |
|  | Risk Manager |  |  |  |
|  | Communications Specialist |  |  |  |
|  | Human Resource Representative |  |  |  |
|  | Security Specialist |  |  |  |

# Appendix C: Press Release

NAPALI wishes to announce that one of our own Board Members has crossed over the rainbow to be with our ancestors. The person’s name (i.e., Glen Kila) departed this world at time (i.e., 4 p.m.) at Queen’s Hospital in Honolulu. Glen has been a hero in his fight against cancer, inspiring many of us to become involved in fundraising and outreach to others with similar medical challenges. Glen served as the Public Relations Director for NAPAPLI for ten years, always giving generously of his time, talent, and compassion for our vision of educating new leaders across the Pacific Rim. Glen will be with us in our hearts as we continue our journey to new destinations. Anyone who would like to talk story about their aloha for Glen may do so on NAPAPLI’s website at [www.napalileadership.org](http://www.napalileadership.org).

# Appendix D: Spokesperson Guidelines

* “Remain calm
* Don’t let the media push you into saying things that you do  not want to say
* Express concern for anyone harmed by the crisis
* Avoid the phrase “no comment”
* If you don’t have the answer to a question, say so, but indicate that you are working to find the answer.
* Be sure to point out the uncertainty of the situations with phrases such as “The situation is evolving” or “We don’t have all the facts yet.” (Ulmer, 2007, page 57)

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# Appendix E: Media Relationships

Below is a list of specific media channels that NAPALI should maintain a good relationship with:

1. Television stations
2. Churches
3. Radio stations
4. Newspapers
5. Mobile phone calls
6. Email campaign
7. Community centers
8. Community non-profit offices
9. City government offices (Department of Health and Human Services)
10. Schools, colleges, vocational and language training centers
11. Libraries
12. Recreation centers (luaus, song and dance festivals, etc.)
13. Community non-profit offices
14. Literature Racks
15. Social Networks
16. Websites