



CRISES AND EMERGENCIES IN ORGANIZATIONS

Crisis, a Greek concept, means “decision” and “departure”. Dictionaries, on the other hand, define a crisis as a critical period that follows a certain event and is of vital importance. The emotional crises mentioned here have been defined by Çaplan and Cullberg as the shaking or even loss of an individual's spiritual balance in such a way that they cannot cope with them when faced with various situations or life events (Sonneck, 1985). Crisis in organizations “forces organizations to respond to change quickly and hastily and therefore go beyond their current experience, knowledge, and functioning” (Russell R, 2018). Looking at the definitions of crisis, it is worth noting that both the concepts of “opportunity” and “danger” are intertwined. In this context, while the crisis contains a negative meaning, it also contains a positive one. For every post-crisis organization, the process of rebuilding the future is, therefore, according to Kadıbeşligil, a different product, another organization, a new business or business area, a new region, etc. many factors can be effective in shaping the future. In the approaches that turn the crisis into an opportunity, this is related to the definition of the future” (Kadıbeşligil, 2002). Crises can occur both within the organization and for non-organizational reasons. According to Fink, each crisis goes through four different stages (Fink, 1986):

1. The first stage is the period of "formation of the crisis". During this period, it sends signals that a crisis is coming. The main thing is to have cadres who can see these signals. Because the warning messages given by the crisis will be taken when they are noticed. This, in turn, will reduce the impact of the crisis. The sooner measures are taken here, the more benefits will be achieved and good results will be achieved.

2. The emergence stage of the crisis; At this stage, the damage of the crisis caused by various reasons to the organization has begun to become obvious. Organizations are experiencing economic and institutional shocks at this stage. The slightest misapplication at this stage can cause great damage to organizations.

3. The third stage is the “chronic crisis stage”. At this stage, the crisis has become permanent. At this stage, the effects of the crisis can last for many years.

4. At the final stage, the crisis is now being resolved and does not pose a threat to the organization. As a new situation has formed for the organization after the crisis, the organization continues with a new road map after that.

These stages are also the stages that tell us what organizations are going through from the moment there is a crisis. In accordance with the crisis stages of organizations, the actions they should take after the crisis has occurred and the steps they should take are critical. Aymankuy (2001) what needs to be done, for every decision to be taken in case of crisis should serve to end the crisis, must be a record of all the work done, in crisis situations and crisis establish a committee authority and responsibilities of the committee drew attention to the importance of the determination of during the crisis, and update information very quickly and everyone in the organization should be made to the same host and in the committee drew attention to the importance of being informed.

Crisis and Organizational Communication

Organizational communication is of critical importance in the crisis process. Crisis communication is a communication strategy that organizations will follow, especially during crisis periods. In this context, crisis communication is very important because it aims to facilitate the production of solutions to the problems experienced in the crisis process. At the same time, prescriptive organizational structures that are far from flexibility can lead to failures or even various crises (Lawson, 2008).

Effective communication is an important means of telling the organization's environment about the importance of organizational activities and the responsibility to the public. The fulfillment of communication in a purposeful manner is largely associated with the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the sender. For effective communication, the sender must use symbols that fall into the field of knowledge and experience of the recipient. Perception and evaluation in communication are important for both the sender and the recipient and are directly related to the way people perceive and evaluate information, ideas, feelings, and messages that reach them from their environment. The increase in the information and message that should be perceived in crisis situations clearly reveals the importance of perception and evaluation (Tutar, 2000). Based on this information, the effective management of a crisis largely depends on effective communication. Usually, during a crisis, the responsibility of communication activities arises to fulfill a dual role, such as assisting in crisis management and protecting the reputation of the organization (Green, 1996).

Various models and recommendations are included in crisis communication. Of these, the model called the 4R MODEL has been adapted to communication in accordance with the preparation, response, improvement, risk, and harm reduction activities of the emergency situations and disaster management cycle. According to the model (www.ReevesStrategyGroup.com), it is as follows;

- **Reduction:** The mitigation or elimination of the factors that may cause a crisis, the extent of the crisis, and its effects by predicting it.
- **Readiness:** Effective use of techniques to be applied during the crisis.
- **Response:** A detailed defense strategy to be formed against the effects of the event or events that led to the crisis.
- **Recovery:** Recovering the damage of damaged resources quickly in order to eliminate the trauma and damage caused by the crisis.

When each of these stages is combined with a correct communication strategy, it will be an expected result that crises turn into opportunities. There are various examples in the literature of crisis communication strategies. Of these, storytelling, defense, and smart analysis are the most well-known methods. (Health and Palenchar, 2009).

Storytelling, when a crisis environment occurs, is to tell the whole event in a language that the target audience can understand by determining a spokesperson from the top management and telling the story firsthand. The aim here is that the organization presents the events experienced during the crisis process as clearly and precisely as possible.

Organizational control is very important in storytelling. The organization must always retain control. In addition, the plot must be set up correctly. The defense process is divided into three parts: The first is the explanation of the crisis situation and the defense of the necessary situations, the second is the stage of notifying the regrets, and the third is the implementation of the necessary techniques for the organization to move away from the crisis. The SMART Analysis Method describes the elements that organizations should pay attention to in the messages created by the messages they want to convey to the external environment. The smart analysis consists of five main principles:

- **Specific:** The details of the information that should be included in the messages transmitted by the organization are important here.
- **Measurable:** The goals of the organization should be based on measurable indicators. Because this is the only way to evaluate the success of messages.
- **Actionable (Achievable):** The organization's message should be determined in such a way that it can overcome the crisis and as simple as the target audience can understand, it should also show that the organization can fight and overcome it.
- **Realistic:** The goals set by the organization should be able to serve an important purpose.
- **Time Limited:** A time frame should be drawn up for the goals set by the organization. The time frame should be determined according to the crisis process. Instead of vague concepts, one should act with precise and clear dates.

In addition to all these, the role of the manager is important in establishing the correct organizational communication during a crisis. Williams speaks of two types of managers in terms of communication. The first of these managers is defined as closed to the outside and the second as an open manager. Openness means sharing knowledge (Williams et al. 2001). In addition, it is important for the manager to use the form of communication, which we call open and effective communication, which is two-way communication, in which the sending and receiving units have the opportunity to mutually affect each other during the crisis.

Social Media and Crisis Communication

In recent years, developments in the field of technology have provided organizations with new options for the use of social media, especially online instant messaging systems have been used as a fast way for communication between organizational members. Other Social media tools (Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc.) have been a tool both for organizations to announce their services to the masses and for managing internal and external processes in crises. As an example of a non-organizational crisis, Twitter activated the "lifeline" feature for users in Japan after the tsunami in Japan. Thanks to Lifeline, users were able to easily access their emergency accounts during crisis periods. After this work, Twitter started its efforts to bring lifeline to an international level and created "Twitter alerts". Thanks to "Twitter alerts", it is possible to reach precise and important information from state aid organizations and non-governmental organizations in times of crisis such as earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, and terrorist attacks.

As a negative example, we see the example of Domino's Pizza in 2009. Two employees of Domino's Pizza shared the unethical images they created with the company's food on Youtube, after the release of the video, the images aroused great repercussions on the internet, and Domino's president Patrick Doyle had to apologize for the bad behavior of his employees and fired two of his staff. In addition, it created a tracking system called "Pizza Tracker" so that customers can follow the production phase of their products when they place an order and tried to improve its post-crisis image. After this crisis of Domino's Pizza, the company; closed the restaurant where the incident took place, and all the products in this restaurant were destroyed. All of its restaurants in the same state were also sold. Due to the video being watched 700,000 times a day, the revenue of the business decreased by 22% in 2011.

Sustainability Communication

The last concept to be mentioned in terms of the case study is the concepts of sustainability and sustainable communication. The United Nations (UN) has defined "sustainability" as the handling of economic expectations and/or needs with environmental and social sensitivity. Organizational sustainability, on the other hand, is an approach that aims to create long-term value in businesses by focusing on ethical, social, environmental, cultural, and economic concepts in business strategies. (Grenberg & Quillian, 2012). In this context, sustainability communication has been defined as a business strategy for companies that integrate sustainability into their operational and strategic activities. , presenting projects at conferences, congresses, and meetings and making speeches on corporate purposes, sustainability reports, and international agreements are some of the communication tools and methods utilized. (Saydam, 2014)

Discussion

It is very important for organizations not to establish a one-way communication while adapting to the changing living and working conditions of their employees in crises, to plan their planning with participatory methods, in terms of the sustainability of the decisions and the embracement of the crisis strategies of the employees. In addition, it is necessary for organizations to choose the communication channels correctly in crises and to use the communication channel they choose correctly. It is among the responsibility areas of organizations and organizational managers to prevent online messaging tools from being in a structure that will cause employees to have work-life balance problems in businesses that apply a remote working strategy in crises. The difficulties experienced by the employees in their private lives due to the crisis should always be taken into account, and organizations should consider crisis communications in terms of employee participation, health and productivity.

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