Crisis Management for Leaders
Program 5: Case Study: Chilean Mine Rescue
Teaming in Crisis Situations …
and Crisis Communications
Amy Edmondson
Dutch Leonard
April 9 & 10, 2020
Crisis Management For Leaders
Program Schedule

- COVID-19 as a Novel Event and Risk Management Framework
- Coping with Sudden Changes in Cash Needs and Availability
- Structuring the Organizational Response
- Recognizing and Managing Novel Risks in Your Supply Chain
- Case Discussion: Chilean Mining Rescue, and Summary
Faculty Group

Dutch Leonard
Bob Kaplan
Fritz Foley
Malcolm Baker
Amy Edmondson
Ananth Raman
THE POWER OF TEAMING IN A CRISIS

Amy Edmondson and Dutch Leonard

HARVARD BUSINESS SCHOOL
WHEN TEAMING MATTERS MOST

team • ing (v.)

Teaming is teamwork on the fly-coordinating and collaborating, across boundaries, without the luxury of stable team structures.

Teaming is especially needed when work is complex and unpredictable.
AUGUST 5, 2010

THE SITUATION

700,000 tons of some of the hardest rock in the world caved in Chile’s century-old San José mine.

33 are missing

There is a refuge 2000 feet underground with limited food supplies

Unstable mine terrain

Above ground, no one knows whether any of the missing miners are alive

CHARACTERIZING THE SITUATION?

▪ Technically complex: Unprecedented, current technology, processes do not apply


▪ Managerially difficult: hundreds of people (experts, families, first responders, media) show up.

▪ Emotionally charged

▪ Politically sensitive

▪ Intense media coverage
Chile Gold / Copper Mine
2,300 feet (701 meters) above trapped miners

Empire State Building
1,250 feet (381 meters)

Eiffel Tower
1,063 feet (324 meters)

Statue of Liberty
305 feet (93 meters)

Mine shelter
2,300 feet (701 meters) underground
THE DRILLING CHALLENGE: NEED HIGH ACCURACY

With limited information
Have to team up across expertise boundaries

With imprecise equipment
Have to experiment and innovate on the fly.
THREE ARENAS FOR ACTION

1. The Miners
2. The Engineers
3. The Executives

Teamed up to survive
Teamed up to innovate
Teamed up to support
WHICH OF THE THREE TYPES OF CHALLENGES (THAT OF THE WORKERS, THE EXPERTS, OR THE EXECUTIVE LEADERS) IS MOST SIMILAR TO WHAT YOU ARE CURRENTLY FACING?

HOW IS IT SIMILAR?
“We will bring those men home, dead or alive, sparing no expense.”

Sebastian Piñera

Is this the right problem statement? What is he accomplishing with this statement?
“A leader’s job is to paint reality and give hope.”

interview in Barron’s, June, 2014

This is also the Stockdale Paradox …

… and Napoleon said, it, too …

… so it is old and very good advice.
Can we **extract 33 men** trapped under 700 meters of rock **before they die**?
TWO EXTREMELY CHALLENGING PROBLEMS

1) Can we locate and reach them before they die?
2) Can we get them out?
A PROBLEM WELL PUT IS HALF SOLVED.

John Dewey
HOW DID THEY DO IT? WHAT DO YOU SEE THEM DOING THAT CONTRIBUTED TO THEIR SUCCESS?
III. Engage in Iterative, Agile Problem-Solving

(0) Establish goals, priorities, and values                              Moral reasoning

(1) Understand the situation                                          Description

(2) Develop options                                                   Creative

(3) Predict outcomes for each option                                  Analytical

4) Choose the best course of action                                   Executive

5) Execute                                                            Administrative
## Success in a Crisis Depends on Innovation Logic

### Business as Usual Circumstances vs. Novel Circumstances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management Logic</th>
<th>Innovation Logic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prescribe &amp; Control</td>
<td>Enable &amp; Learn</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assumes Predictability</td>
<td>Assumes Uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple Interdependencies</td>
<td>Complex Interdependencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emphasis on Efficiency</td>
<td>Emphasis on Experimentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clear Shared Criteria</td>
<td>Multiple Competing Criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hierarchical Command</td>
<td>Distributed Teaming</td>
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<tr>
<td>Insist on Adherence to Plan</td>
<td>Engage the Experts &amp; Stay Out of the Way</td>
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DAY 17
WHAT DO YOU THINK WAS MOST DIFFICULT FOR THE TEAM DURING THE FIRST 17 DAYS?

IS THAT SIMILAR TO WHAT IS MOST DIFFICULT FOR YOU?
“EXECUTION-AS-LEARNING”

It’s agile, collaborative, & iterative:

• You face many **UNKNOWNNS**

• You must cross **BOUNDARIES** to bring in different **EXPERTISE** at different times.

• You rarely have a fixed set of **DELIVERABLES** or roles.

• You often must do **NEW** things that haven't been done before!

• You must **ACT** – to learn.
DAY 70
ANY FURTHER OBSERVATIONS?

WHAT ELEMENTS OF THE APPROACH TAKEN BY THE RESCUE TEAM DID YOU SEE AS CRITICAL TO ITS SUCCESS?

....TO YOUR SUCCESS?
WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

- Shared purpose
- Teaming across expertise boundaries
- Listening to ideas independent of formal power/position
- Persistence through failure
- Process discipline (powerful learning routines)
- A culture of innovation
INNER CONTRADICTIONS OF AN INNOVATION CULTURE*

• A culture of innovation is
• chaotic & focused
• playful & disciplined
• values deep expertise & broad-thinking boundary spanners
• promotes high standards & tolerates failure...

WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

- Shared purpose
- Teaming across expertise boundaries
- Listening to ideas independent of formal power/position
- Persistence through failure
- Process discipline (powerful learning routines)
- A culture of innovation
- Enabling leadership (direction setting and listening)
“TYPES” OF PROBLEMS / CHALLENGES

Nature of the challenge or problem
- Clear, well-defined
- Ambiguous/contested

Nature of the solution
- Known To Us
- NOT Known To Us

- Action Problem
- Design Problem
- Goals / Values Clarification Problem
- PRESIDENT

- RESCUERS
- ENGINEERS
COVID-19 IS GIVING YOU ALL THREE OF THESE CHALLENGES

Nature of the challenge or problem
Clear, well-defined  Ambiguous/contested

Known To Us

Nature of the solution

Action Problem

Design Problem

Goals / Values Clarification Problem

NOT Known To Us
CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

The Stockdale Paradox (Slightly Revised)

The most effective leaders in crises:

Are brutally honest about the situation (FACTS)

Offer a rational basis for optimism (HOPE)

Offer emotional understanding (EMPATHY)
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FOR REFLECTION

Who do you see doing this today?
Friday, March 15, 2019:

Mass shootings at two mosques in Christchurch during Friday prayers

YouTube link:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wKqdC6l6ICk

Prime Minister Ardern spoke *while the event was still ongoing* – people in Christchurch were still being urged to stay indoors as police were seeking possible accomplices.
REACTIONS? THOUGHTS?

WHAT DO YOU SEE PM ARDERN DOING?
CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS: THE FOUR-PART SCRIPT

1. Say what you know (and the basis of your knowledge) → (DO NOT SPECULATE!)
2. Say what you are doing
3. Say what others should do
4. Offer understanding, empathy, and perspective
CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS: THE FOUR CANONICAL QUESTIONS

People in a crisis implicitly or explicitly ask four central questions:

1. Who are “we?” (Am I part of this “we?”) (IDENTITY)
2. What things that we care about are at risk? (VALUES)
3. What happened / is happening? (SITUATIONAL AWARENESS)
4. What do people like us, with values like ours, do in a situation like this? (ACTION)

PEOPLE WILL INEVITABLY FIND ANSWERS TO THESE FOUR QUESTIONS … IT WILL BE BETTER IF THEY COME FROM YOU!
CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS: THE FOUR “M”S

MESSAGE What, exactly, are you trying to convey?

MESSAGER Who is the message coming from? (Whose authority/ credibility is it relying on?)

MESSENER Who should convey it? (Who will have the best credibility as the presenter / deliverer?)

MESSAGEE Who is the message addressed to? (Does it respect her/his/their premises, assumptions, and realities?)
Leadership in a crisis is the process of bringing a new, and generally unwelcome reality to an individual, group, organization, or society, and helping her/him/it/them successfully adapt to it.

*Ronald Heifetz at Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government has written and taught about what he describes as “adaptive leadership.” This definition is related to his work.
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ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP IS STRESSFUL ... 
... FOR ALL CONCERNED

Adaptive leaders encourage their followers to confront reality (Stockdale, revisited)

This is stressful, and pushback against the leader is common

(People sometimes treat the leader as if she or he were the source or cause of the unwelcome reality)

Therefore, pacing is critical:

fast enough to get the job done;
not so fast that people can’t handle the stress

TIME IS AN ADAPTIVE RESOURCE
OVER TO YOU …

1. *Structure* – Critical Incident Management
2. *People* – Values + Internal + Situation
4. *Teamwork* – Safe to Innovate / Experiment
5. *Communication, Communication, Communication*
NEVER FORGET ... RESILIENCE IS WHAT YOU ARE DOING
You …

are the answer …

to our prayers.
GOING FORWARD

• New issues will continue to arise
• Important priorities will come into conflict
• Place confidence in your process
• Re-work the problem, continuously
  
  WE place our faith …
  
  … in your leadership
We *ARE* the professionals.

This *IS* the bigtime.

This is *NOT* a *REHEARSAL*.

These may well be the most challenging issues of your professional and personal lifetime.

All you should ask of yourself (or others) is to do the best you reasonably can.
TAKING CARE

• Be safe – keep your distance
• Help keep others safe
• Take care of yourself -- you are an important resource for all of us
  – Anxiety and constant surprise and problem-solving are weary-ing
    • Seek (episodic) sanctuary
    • “Give yourself permission” when needed
• This is going to be a marathon
This **MUST** be done.

This may be one of the **HARDEST** things that we have ever done.

**YOU** can do it.

**ONLY** you can do it.
This time of year …

Passover – Second Seder last night …

Good Friday … Easter Sunday

Vaisakhi is on Monday …

Ramadan is approaching …
GOOD LUCK
AND
GODSPEED