

<i>Table 3: SCCT crisis response strategies</i>
Primary crisis response strategies
Deny crisis response strategies
<i>Attack the accuser:</i> Crisis communicator confronts the person or group claiming something is wrong with the organization. Occasionally, the groups' own flaws might be pointed out.
<i>Denial:</i> Crisis communicator asserts that there is no crisis. (This often takes many attempts to "sink in.")
<i>Scapegoat:</i> Crisis communicator blames some person or group outside of the organization for the crisis.
Diminish crisis response strategies
<i>Excuse:</i> Crisis communicator minimizes organizational responsibility by denying intent to do harm and/or claiming inability to control the events that triggered the crisis. May be viewed as scapegoating.
<i>Justification:</i> Crisis communicator minimizes the perceived damage caused by the crisis by offering a logical explanation.
Rebuild crisis response strategies
<i>Compensation:</i> Crisis communicator offers conciliatory gifts (i.e., apologies, money, met demands) to victims.
<i>Apology:</i> Crisis communicator indicates the organization takes full responsibility for the crisis and asks stakeholders for forgiveness.
Secondary crisis response strategies
Bolstering crisis response strategies
<i>Reminder:</i> Tell stakeholders about the past good works of the organization. Often viewed as deflection.
<i>Ingratiation:</i> Crisis communicator praises stakeholders and/or reminds them of past good works they have done.
<i>Victimage:</i> Crisis communicator remind stakeholders that the organization is a victim of the crisis too.

Coombs, W.T. (2007). Protecting organization reputations during a crisis: The development and application of situational crisis communication theory. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 10(3), 163-176.

Specific Crisis: Adjunct faculty are concerned over potential loss of employment due to declines in enrollment.

Response strategy	COVID Application Example
Attack the accuser	“Well, if you would have recruited more students in the past, we wouldn’t be here.”
Denial	“Trust me. You’re job is going to be fine. Enrollment is fine.”
Scapegoat	“Well, if the accreditors would just loosen their restrictions on how many students we can have in a class or what classes you can teach, we’d be alright.”
Excuse	“This is a pandemic. It’s out of our control.
Justification	“Unless we see 5% enrollment growth from today’s numbers, some faculty could be let go.”
Compensation	“We will recognize anyone who has worked here up until X date with a pin and name plaque on the recognition wall.”
Apology	“My lack of ability to forecast the enrollment decline has us really struggling. I am sorry for not being able to get enrollment numbers up.”
Reminder	“Remember when we went through this in 2008? We’ll work our way through it.”
Ingratiation	“I really hope that doesn’t happen because students really want to have the great teaching experience you offer.”
Victimage	“I know the institution has really taken a hit on enrollment as a whole. This is happening across the institution.”

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Please note: These are application examples meant to demonstrate how each response strategy might look in hypothetical contexts. I make no claims that any of these examples would be a good idea to use in real life. They are included as demonstrations on the concepts only!

A few communication tips:

1. In times of uncertainty. Consistency goes a long way.
2. Decide on a message and stay on the message.
3. When you can, slow down. Sleep on it!
4. Have multiple eyes (and a few young people) look over communications before they are released.
5. Be the main source of communication on a crisis.
6. Be succinct.
7. Describe how and why decisions were made.
8. Communicate often. Be proactive.
9. Connect to basal emotions. Be human. Provide hope and reassurance.
10. Manage your symbols well.