

Communication with Media

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Zásady pro vypracování:

Systematicky zpracujte a zhodnoťte teoretické poznatky o Public Relations a krizové komunikaci s médii.

Vyberte příklady mediálních vystoupení v hospodářské praxi a analyzujte komunikační dovednosti zúčastněných.

Navrhňte doporučení ke zlepšení analyzovaných mediálních vystoupení.

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Black, Jay, . 1995. Introduction to Media Communication : Understand the past, experience the present, marvel at the future. Madison: Brown & Benchmark.

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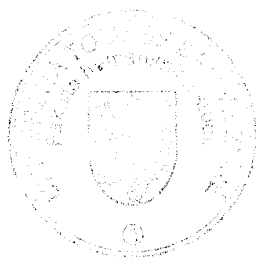
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ABSTRAKT

V mé bakalářské práci se zabývám tématem komunikace s médii a jejím vlivem na dnešní společnost. Uvádím teoretické poznatky z oblasti public relations, historický vývoj public relations a jak se public relations liší od reklamy. Představuji také teoretické poznatky o media relations a návody, jak v různých situacích jednat s médii.

Dále analyzuji konkrétní mediální vystoupení veřejně známých osob v USA a hodnotím jejich projev po stránce komunikačních dovedností.

Klíčová slova: public relations, media relations, komunikace, média, veřejný projev, interview

ABSTRACT

My bachelor thesis deals with the topic of communication with media and its influence on today's society. I elaborate on theoretical knowledge of public relations, historical development of public relations, as well as what are the main differences between public relations and promotion. I also introduce theory of media relations and instructions how to deal with media in various situations.

Further I analyze media appearances of publicly known people from the USA and I evaluate their performance and their communication skills.

Keywords: public relations, media relations, communication, media, speech, interview

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| INTRODUCTION | 7 |
| I THEORY | 8 |
| 1 PUBLIC RELATIONS..... | 9 |
| 1.1 THE ESSENCE OF PUBLIC RELATIONS | 9 |
| 1.2 PR HISTORY | 10 |
| 1.3 PUBLIC RELATIONS VERSUS ADVERTISING | 11 |
| 1.4 PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLIC OPINION..... | 12 |
| 2 MEDIA RELATIONS | 13 |
| 2.1 PREPARATION | 13 |
| 2.2 MEET THE MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE | 13 |
| 2.3 SPEECH, PRESENTATION, INTERVIEW | 14 |
| 2.4 THE DANGER OF ‘NO COMMENT’ | 15 |
| 2.5 TELEVISION: BEWARE OF THE CAMERA..... | 16 |
| 2.6 JOURNALISTS PLAY TRICKS | 16 |
| 2.6.1 Yes/No questions..... | 16 |
| 2.6.2 Avoid hypotheses..... | 17 |
| 2.6.3 Personal standpoint..... | 17 |
| 2.7 MEDIA RELATIONS IN CRISES | 17 |
| 2.7.1 Crisis communication plan | 18 |
| 2.7.2 Corporate Identity..... | 20 |
| 3 SUMMARY | 24 |
| II ANALYSIS | 25 |
| 4 METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES | 26 |
| 5 THANK YOU FOR SMOKING..... | 28 |
| 6 JOHN KERRY’S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH..... | 30 |
| 7 JOHN MCCAIN | 34 |
| 7.1 LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN..... | 34 |
| 7.2 MEET THE PRESS WITH TIM RUSSERT | 36 |
| 7.3 CONCLUSION FROM JOHN MCCAIN’S PERFORMANCE..... | 38 |
| 8 EXAMPLE OF CRISIS COMMUNICATION..... | 40 |
| 9 RECOMMENDATIONS | 42 |
| CONCLUSION | 44 |
| WORKS CITED | 45 |
| LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS..... | 46 |

INTRODUCTION

Every at least a little publicly known person has to, from time to time, communicate with media. Communication with media has become vital for everyone who wants or needs to influence public opinion and that is how media should be perceived – as a way to convey the communication to the public. In my bachelor thesis, which is divided into theoretical part and analytical part, I am going to elaborate on different ways of the communication among media, business representatives, politicians and other subjects. What is necessary to realise is the fact, that having good relations with media is vital to be successful in business as well as in a political career, because media have gained so much power and have become very influential in today's world.

In the theoretical part I am going to elaborate on theoretical knowledge concerning public relations, media relations and media relations in crises. I will try to describe how to deal with a media representative, from the point of view of a public relations worker or a politician. I am also going to mention some tricks and traps which might appear during an interview and I am going to provide recommendations on how to avoid falling in such traps without losing your face.

In the analytical part I am going to continue with the topic of speeches and interviews from the theoretical part; I am going focus on analysis of speeches or interviews given by publicly known people – such as politicians. I will focus my attention on the way how each speech or interview is conducted as well as what makes these speeches or interviews successful and interesting. The analyzed examples (audio or video) are going to be enclosed on a CD together with their transcripts, if available. From these analyzed examples I am going to conclude recommendations and advice on how to conduct a speech and what to do, and what not to do during an interview.

I. THEORY

1 PUBLIC RELATIONS

1.1 The essence of Public Relations

The term ‘Public Relations’ (PR) spread around the world rapidly and it can be heard from everywhere nowadays; it has become an important part of today’s business world and it is impossible for any successful company to survive the competitive environment without PR. The purpose of Public Relations is creating, maintaining and improving relationships between an organisation and the general public.

Many definitions of the term ‘Public Relations’ can be found; some of them are more similar than others, therefore it is not easy to identify the best of them. According to the ‘Mexican Statement’ which was accepted in 1978 on the World Assembly of Public Relations Associations the definition is: “Public Relations is the art and social science of analysing trends, predicting their consequences, counselling organisational leaders and implementing programmes of action which will serve both the organisation’s and the public interest.” (Tymson, online)

The Merriam-Webster Online dictionary provides us with this definition of Public Relations: “Public relations are the business of inducing the public to have understanding for and goodwill toward a person, firm, or institution.” (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, online)

Sam Black, a well-known Public Relations specialist, presents his general definition of PR in the book *The Essentials of Public Relations*: “PR activities are an art and social science trying to achieve a harmony with the environment through a mutual agreement which is based on real and complete information.” (Black 1994, 18)

Other authors define Public Relations activities as “intentional, planned and long-term effort to create and support mutual understanding between organisations and general public.” (Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová 2004, 14)

The question still remains: how could we define public relations? I personally agree with the statement of the Committee on Terminology of Public Relations. The report by this committee says that “thorough definition of public relations is no more possible to provide, because aims, activities, techniques, forms and other components of PR have become so extensive, that their simplification into a single definition is not possible.” (Lesly 1995, 18)

1.2 PR History

Public Relations is not a new concept that appeared just recently in our lives, but a very old thought its roots might be even tracked far back to Mesopotamia, Assyria, Persia and Egypt. These ancient cultures were already well aware of the power of public opinion; therefore they used art of persuasion to form and influence the public opinion in favour of the government (or governors). As a more recent example of Public Relations might serve The French Revolution (1789 – 1799) which used all existing ways to influence public opinion – e.g. books, newspapers. (Black 1994, 192)

A great turning point in the evolution of Public Relations was the moment, when information started to be perceived as goods – people were willing to pay to get that information and because of this change mass media could develop (in 15th/16th century in Europe). The expansion of mass press was later enabled by technical and technological developments. In 19th century a new way of financing the press appeared – advertising. Newspapers were no longer paid by sales, but by commercials, which was the first step in influencing general public. New type of newspapers as well as new type of journalists came into existence. These journalists, press agents, wrote articles with specific content, in the interest of individuals or various groups. At this moment we can start speaking about modern Public Relations. An American press agent Ivy Ledbetter Lee (1877 – 1934) is considered to be a major figure in the history of Public Relations. His rule number 1 was: “Always tell the truth about your client’s activities, even if telling the truth might harm your client’s interests. The reader (observer) needs complete, impartial and independent opinion.” (Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová 2004, 11) Lee applied the methods of Public Relations in real life, and he also contributed to the theory of PR by publishing the Declaration of Principles.

The beginning of ‘professional’ Public Relations is considered to be the year 1923, when Edward Louis Bernays published the book *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, the first theoretical book of Public Relations (Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová 2004, 10-11).

Since 1948 the development of Public Relations ‘went official’. In 1948 in London the Institute of Public Relations (IPR) was founded and today it has over 9000 members (Tymson, online). Nowadays it is called the Chartered Institute of Public Relations, CIPR. All members of CIPR are required to adhere to the Code of Professional Conduct which was published by CIPR already in 1951.

In 1955 the International Public Relations Association (IPRA) was founded. The aim of IPRA is increasing the level in the field of Public Relations all over the world (the founding members of IPRA were the United Kingdom, Norway, France, the Netherlands and the USA, but today the IPRA unites members from 64 countries). An international association, that unites national PR agencies, is the International Communications Consultancy Organisation (ICCO). ICCO represents about 75 percent of PR market in Europe and the USA (Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová 2004, 12).

1.3 Public Relations versus advertising

We could say that Public Relations and advertising have few things in common – both require certain level of creativity, they both create the organisation image, they both have the same aims and goals: to influence the public or individual opinion and to support sales. However, the methods used are very different.

Table 1. Comparison of public relations and advertising:

| Advertising | Public Relations |
|---|---|
| The organisation pays for ad space. | The space is gained through publishing of interesting information. |
| The organisation can publish whatever it wants. | The organisation has to publish according to the interests of the reader or editor. |
| Message credibility is low (everybody knows it was paid). | Message credibility is high (the communication is done through a third person). |
| Advertising tries to draw attention by praising, it persuades customers to buy. | Public Relations inform, explain, provide facts, try to touch customer's intellect |
| Advertising costs are about 70 % of marketing budget. | Public Relations costs are about 30 % of marketing budget. |

Source: Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová: Media Relations není manipulace. 2004.

Another difference between PR and advertising is the time when they take effect. Advertising is usually concerned only about short-term goals. PR, on the other hand, tries to communicate with their targets (general public, potential customers) and build mutual understanding and trust. Because understanding and trust cannot be gained overnight, it usually takes longer for Public Relations to take effect; therefore PR aim at long-term goals.

To summarize the differences between PR and advertising, advertising aims at economic profit, whereas PR aims at ‘psychological gain’

Philip Kotler points out the difference between public relations and advertising by a statement “Whereas advertising is something you pay for; public relations are something you pray for.” (Kotler 2000, 129) This statement clearly says that advertising is fully under control of a company – what the company pays for, that is going to appear in the media. General public is slowly starting to realize this fact and that is why advertisements do not influence people as they used to in the past.

1.4 Public Relations and public opinion

According to Edward L. Bernays the public opinion is a “result of aggregated ideas of men and women in the society or other social group” (Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová 2004). In other words public opinion is contemporary ideas, opinions, and attitudes, which can be influenced – by media for instance.

There are many individuals or groups of individuals who are important for an organisation and it is necessary to realise which part of the ‘public’ is the most important in a given time period. Therefore we can distinguish between internal and external public relations. (Svoboda 2004)

Internal public relations (also called Human Relations) include for example internal and external employees or management. Human Relations focus on creating a positive environment in an organisation with the help of internal communication. Unfortunately, internal PR is often being underestimated. Among the tools of internal PR might be group discussions with employees, company journal, company assembly, information boards etc.)

External public relations include the public who is outside the organisation – for example customers, government, media, educational institutions or general public. Communication with the external public is much more often than the communication with internal public. Some of the tools of external PR are personal or phone contacts, lectures, press media or internet.

2 MEDIA RELATIONS

Often, Public Relations use media, newspapers, television, magazines, etc. to convey the desired information. The main difference in this type of publicity compared to advertising is the fact, that organisations hardly ever have any control over the message in the media, at least not as much as they do in advertising. People often mistakenly think that PR is based only on communication with journalists/media, which is not true. Media Relations is the subspecialty of Public Relations, although it makes up about 80 percent of PR work (Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová 2004, 25).

The most important part of effective and successful Media Relations of every organisation is being prepared to answer various questions of media. The best strategy to do so is to work out the communication manual, put it into written form, update it at least annually, and make sure that all employees of the organisation are familiar with this manual.

It is crucial for every organisation to try to build friendly relationship with media. Good tactics is to base the relationship on trust and understanding and to perceive media as some kind of ‘both-way’ bridge between organisation and general public. Having good relationship with media is the best and most effective way for creating a positive organisation image. The way the organisation is perceived by the media is the way how the media describe the organisation to the general public.

2.1 Preparation

It is more that worth it to be ready for a meeting with a media representative. For the interview to be successful it is important to create good conditions for both the organisation representative and media representative. It is wise to find out basic facts about the journalist – what topic should the interview concern, their personal and professional background, what media they represent, when the interview is about to be published and in what context (Bajčan 2003). Once again, if an organisation often gets interviewed by media, it is vital to build friendly relationship with them. Bigger companies usually have the Public Relations department or at least a spokesperson.

2.2 Meet the media representative

Every spokesperson should know that being on good terms with a journalist means being able to provide complete and true information. It is also highly valued by every journalist if the spokesperson expresses the standpoint. However, the spokesperson needs to be careful

not to express their own personal standpoint (their own opinion), if representing an organisation. Spokesperson should not tell lies to the journalist, because the lie might be revealed sooner or later which might discredit the organisation and regaining the credibility is much more difficult than losing it. On the other hand, it is not advisable to tell everything. If the spokesperson knows that the journalist might ask any unwanted questions, it is better to be ready to provide answers for such questions as well. But the spokesperson should not mention the unpleasant questions, because it is possible that the journalist does not know about the unpleasant facts and wants the interview because of a different reason. The spokesperson should always wait for the question and then answer it (Bajčan 2003).

The spokesperson of any organisation should not speak for other organisations, the competitors. If the journalist asks: “And what about the competitors?” it is only a trick played by the journalist to get the spokesperson’s opinions and conclusions. Therefore it is advisable to answer: “I am not competent to evaluate the competitors, you will have to ask them, not me.” (Bajčan 2003)

While being in an interview the spokesperson should look self-assured and self-confident. It is the spokesperson who should lead the communication, not the journalist. However, it is not wise to praise the organisation too much, because the journalist will detect this appraisal and will not take it seriously. The spokesperson should let the journalist to make a picture themselves and let the journalist to conclude an opinion on their own.

The last but not least rule for dealing with a journalist, is to never attack the journalist – neither physically, which is quite obvious, nor verbally. Spokesperson needs to be peaceful and friendly, even if the journalist is extremely unfriendly or even drunk, because if the spokesperson would not act friendly, the journalist might want to get back at him on the pages of the newspapers (or other media) they represent (Bajčan 2003).

2.3 Speech, Presentation, Interview

There are certain rules and pieces of advice that are to be followed to ensure a successful speech, presentation or interview. Such rules include being really accurate, precise and brief. One more rule can be added to those general ones and that is a ‘rule of three’. Repeating the key information or message three times is the best way to ensure that the meaning will be delivered in a proper way and that the media representative understands the point. Of course you cannot repeat the very same word three times in one statement;

that would sound ridiculous or maybe even suspicious. The repeated part should be always said in different words and should be repeated in the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the statement as some kind of closure, summary.

Another rule concerns improvisation. When it comes to public presentation, the preparation cannot be underestimated. Moreover, if you prepare to improvise beforehand, the presentation will be a big success. The presentation must be energetic and the audience must have the feeling that the presenter knows what he/she is talking about. The main points should be repeated multiple times (the 'rule of three' applies here); unexpected comparisons such as metaphors or an appropriately used joke make the presentation more interesting; audio-visual support of the presented facts also attracts the attention and they are easier to remember; the end of the presentation should summarize and underline the main message of the whole appearance (Bajčan 2003, 62-71).

2.4 The danger of 'no comment'

It is a very difficult task to say 'no' and still maintain the trust of the journalist. Therefore the two-word answer 'no comment' appeared, but is it really wise to insist on no-comment-answer? Such an answer is not quite polite, not wise, and it is for sure that it will not help in creating good and friendly relationships with the media. It can even lead to the thought that there are some secrets the spokesperson wants to hide.

Much better response is explaining to the journalist, why it is not possible to give a reply to the given problem and try to give the journalist some general statement: "the meeting is still in progress and we cannot predict its results", "because the salary discussions are not over yet" or "we do not have the complete report yet". Such statements give at least something to the journalist, and the spokesperson did not give away any sensitive information.

To avoid the 'no comment' it is vital for the spokesperson to be prepared for the interview. It is necessary to predict the unpleasant questions, and be ready to answer them somehow. Sometimes even humour can be helpful. For example: There was a made up rumour that McDonald adds worms into its hamburgers. Such rumour might have harmed McDonald seriously, so McDonald was advised to announce, that they would never use worms in their hamburgers, because worm meat is much more expensive than beef (Black 1994, 68-69).

2.5 Television: Beware of the camera

Visual news such as television (news, interview, talk show) have much greater impact on public than written text. We need to realise that communication on TV does not begin at the moment when the interviewer finishes the question, but it starts much earlier. The simple signs how we react to the questions, if we gaze sideways while the question is being asked, if we raise the eyebrows, or nod, all those signs tell a lot instead of us (Bajčan 2003).

Moreover, the first 20 seconds of an interview or a business meeting are very important, because you will never get a second chance to make the first impression. Eye contact is one of the most important ways how people communicate. Natural human instinct, when meeting someone new, is to check out the new person. Therefore it is advisable to allow others to check you out as well. People are often taught that maintaining an eye contact is a sign of self confidence. On the other hand, if you maintain the strong eye contact there will be no opportunity to do the initial meeting-new-person process. Denying others to do this initial process will not make them to give up trying, but they will try to steal glances at you during the interview or business meeting, which will make them distracted and unfocused on the topic discussed. So if you want a focused listener, you have to give him or her few seconds to complete the process of looking you over. How to do this? Check your briefcase or folders, arrange the papers you have, hang up the coat or move the chair closer. Look up no sooner than you have given the interviewer those few seconds to conduct the natural human instinct (Pease 2005, 186).

2.6 Journalists play tricks

Sometimes journalists get so desperate in getting a sensation, that they play various tricks to get the desired information, even if it means that this information is misleading or completely untrue. Such journalist's methods are often far beyond journalist's ethics, but there is not much the spokesperson can do about it.

2.6.1 Yes/No questions

This is quite a favourite trick to get a single standpoint – yes or no. When the spokesperson explains a difficult and complicated problem in deep details to inform the media as completely as possible, and the journalist asks, if the problem is black or white, the

journalist should get alerted that a trick is being played on him and answer in a polite way, that this problem is neither black nor white, but it is black-and- white (Bajčan 2003).

2.6.2 Avoid hypotheses

If the spokesperson is asked a question starting with: “what if...?” they should not jump to conclusions and try to answer such hypothetical questions, because it is another method to get a sensation. A proper way to answer such question is this one: “If such conditions occur, we will try to solve them and we will also inform you. However, such conditions did not occur yet, therefore we cannot conclude any opinions about it.” It is very important not to answer hypothetical questions, since even hypothetical answers might be perceived in a negative way by the general public or the competition (Bajčan 2003).

2.6.3 Personal standpoint

Expressing the personal standpoint by the spokesperson is inappropriate. If after presenting the official organisation standpoint the journalist asks for the personal opinion of the spokesperson and the spokesperson says that what was just said are all lies, the organisation does not look very good at all. Every spokesperson should realize that while representing an organisation there is no such thing as their personal opinion. Spokesperson knows that whatever they say is perceived as being said by the organisation not the individual spokesperson (Bajčan 2003).

2.7 Media relations in crises

Crises appear when expected the least. Therefore it is impossible to react on a crisis after it has appeared – that is too late, but it is necessary to be prepared before the crisis arises. Communication in crisis is only some kind of extension of the communication under ‘regular’ circumstances. If an organisation has built good Media Relations (including relationships with media, government, employees, business partners and other general public), it is then easier to convey a message in a crisis. All the crises cannot be foreseen and consequently prevented from happening, no matter what anyone says, but you can be at least prepared to react in time.

The ‘time’ is the most important variable in a crisis; therefore trying to find the source of the crisis is not that important in the beginning, but a fast reaction and ‘extinguishing the fire’ are crucial, which means trying to stop the problem to spread any further. Coming up with a solution to a problem should not be a question of days, but a matter of few hours (or

even minutes). Monitoring the media is advisable to prevent the problem from spreading. Moreover, monitoring the local or regional media and taking actions before the problem spreads might completely stop the crisis from going to general public (Bajčan 2003).

2.7.1 Crisis communication plan

Before creating a crisis communication plan, it is important to realize three points: Who can be influenced by the crisis? What can be influenced by the crisis? What consequences can the crisis have? Moreover, how we react on the crisis is also very important. The reaction must be adequate to the seriousness of the crisis, to the consequences it might cause and to the time it might take. If we overreact, we might change a simple problem (such as typing mistake or misinterpretation) into a real crisis, which would be actually caused by the organisation itself (Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová 2004, 93-97).

When creating the plan we can rely on three main rules. Firstly, no crisis will last forever. Secondly, even the most unpleasant truth, but admitted, is a good start to get over the crisis, because in today's world of internet every lie is not only revealed sooner and later, but also spread around the world in a matter of seconds. If the crisis is not admitted at first, it is very hard for every organisation to regain the lost credibility. The third rule is closely connected with prevention of the crisis; it says where there is a good crisis communication and crisis plan, no crisis can burst out. The first step in creating the crisis plan is to realize the potential sources of danger. We might think of outer or inner source of crisis (Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová 2004, 93-97).

Outer sources of crisis include all influences, which arise outside the organisation and such sources appear unexpectedly and they are unpredictable, because no organisation can predict the reactions on their actions. One of the main problems in this case is the fact, that the problem is often promoted in the media (in a negative light).

The best course of action when dealing with outer source is to use the same tools as the 'attacking' side did. It might seem easiest to use the media, but there are other possibilities to solve such problems, without an unnecessary attention of the public (Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová 2004, 95):

Without media:

- Letter of apology from a responsible worker
- Letter of apology from the governing body of the organisation
- Personal discussion with a responsible worker

With media:

- Apology/correction in the press
- Press agent's announcement – press release
- Explanatory articles in press – full-area release
- Explanatory articles in press – full-area and regional release
- News conference
- Use other media (radio, television)

Inner sources of crisis problems might arise as unexpectedly as the outer problems. There are many causes of inner problems: insufficient work of one employee/department, or craving for vengeance of a dismissed employee or of an improperly evaluated employee. Quite serious problems often have their cause in human relationships. No matter what the cause of the problem is, the organisation needs to take such actions, which eliminate the impact of this problem on the organisation itself, and also stop the problems from going public.

How to deal with inner problems? First of all it is essential to be able to detect problems in the organisation. With an early detection the organisation can avoid the potential crisis. It is vital to support the loyalty of the employees and their pride in the organisation to prevent the inner problems from appearing. If the problem bursts out, we need to evaluate, whether it can be solved with regular personnel management tools or we should use the crisis plan. In both cases it is advisable to keep the problem from going public, because media might present the problem in a misleading way (Věřčák, Girgašová, Liškařová 2004, 95-95).

When creating the plan it is wise to realise that it must be simple and easy to understand so that anyone who reads it can execute it. Then there are few steps which are worth following (Braud, online):

- First of all it is necessary to be aware of possible problems that might befall the organisation. Therefore it is vital to interview the employees (all of them: from top

executives, managers, to line workers) and ask them directly what they think might go wrong or what could result in a crisis. Organisations need to consider even the worst case scenarios or most bizarre situations (these are much easier to believe after September 11, 2001)

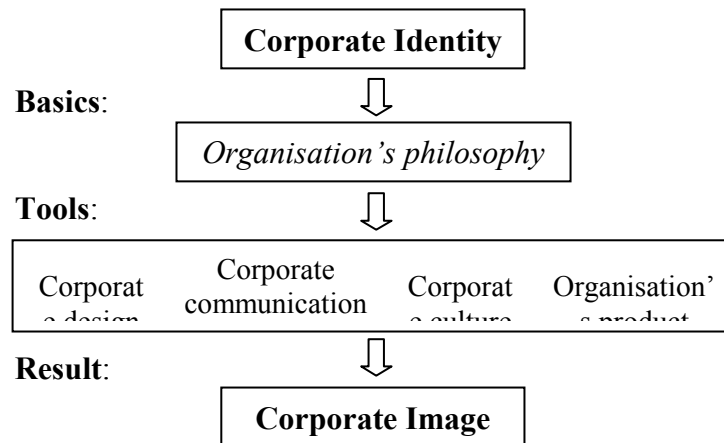
- The second step would be creating the core of the plan. This is the part which says how the key leaders, media, employees, customers and the community are notified during a crisis. In other words it should include the communication to all the audiences during the first critical hour of the crisis.
- In the next step the organisation works out the anticipated words which the organisation would say to its critical audiences during the possible crisis situations acquired during the interview with the employees. This step is important, because the pre-written statements are already pre-approved by the legal and executive staff and consequently the organisation can explain the situation to the media very quickly – before any rumours have change to appear.
- The last step in creating the plan is testing it. Weak spots can be discovered during the test and it also tests the qualities of the spokesperson; and media training can be provided if necessary to avoid problems in the real crisis situation.

2.7.2 Corporate Identity

The best way to handle any crisis is to prevent it from happening. However, that is not always possible and it is just the time of a conflict or potential crisis, when corporate identity, a very important and abstract part of an organisation, ‘comes in handy’. Corporate identity needs to be built during the ‘regular’ times – with no conflicts or crises.

Corporate Identity can be characterized as the leading idea and thought of a corporation, which holds the corporation together and sets its course. Corporate identity as a tool of public relations influences general public by the help of corporate design, corporate communications, corporate culture, and product design/culture. Corporate identity might include e.g. history and traditions, company’s integration into its neighbourhood and also company’s vision statement. Company’s vision should *motivate the employees*, because if they know the vision statement they can take better actions and coordinate their work to achieve that vision. The vision also needs to be *realistic* and achievable (Němec 1999).

Picture 1. shows the structure of corporate identity.



Picture 1. Corporate identity structure (Svoboda 2006, 30)

Organisation's philosophy is the starting point for a creation of corporate identity. Modern market economy is mainly oriented on the customer; therefore customer's satisfaction is usually perceived as the most important aim of a company. Nowadays, most companies have to cope with difficult problems and thorny issues of today's world, they have to react on them and adjust to the latest development. Consequently, finding an optimal philosophy is becoming a very hard and tricky task for most organisations. (Svoboda 2006, 30)

Corporate design means visual expression of an organisation and it needs to convey the identity of a company clearly and effectively. Corporate design can be understood as *a unified design or a unified visual style* and it includes brand (logo) for instance. (Svoboda 2006, 31)

The long-term goal of **corporate communications** is to build positive attitudes towards the company, and create a unified corporate image – together with corporate design, corporate culture and organisation's product. Influencing or even changing public opinion is a very complicated and difficult process and that is why the corporate communications need time to take effect and they cannot focus only on achieving an immediate success. Corporate communications are intended to increase recognition of a company as well as its credibility among general public (Svoboda 2006, 32-39).

Corporate Culture is a system of values and behavioural patterns of company's employees, which create corporate image through corporate design and corporate

communications. Corporate culture is not a ‘once-produced’ result, but usually a phenomenon that evolves for many years (Svoboda 2006, 40). Another author claims, that “corporate culture is an aggregation of both material and nonmaterial values, which influence corporation’s decision-making ... therefore corporate culture also includes the way how the corporation handles its internal and external public relations” (Němec 1996, 53)

Organisation’s product is not only a physical product offered by a company, but in a wider context it means all services that the organisation offers. The product/services are a very important part of corporate identity; without a product there would be no need for creating corporate identity at all (Svoboda 2006, 44).

Corporate image is an image of the organisation in general public, which means the way how people perceive the given organisation. We could say that public relations are aimed at gaining a positive image for the organisation. The members and the internal public of the corporation are very important factor in the process of creating the corporate image. Corporate image aims to realise to goals of the organisation and good corporate image can positively influence other key areas such as (Němec 1999, 79):

- *It makes the organisation more attractive on the labour market.* Corporate image is one of the key factors for highly qualified and specialised workers or university graduates when applying for a job.
- *It motivates the employees.* There is a big difference between satisfied and proud employees and those who just work in the organisation ‘to pay the rent’. Employee’s identification with the image (and also with the identity) of the organisation helps to get over difficult times (crises) and also helps to improve their work productivity.
- *It influences the capital market.* Organisations with good corporate image are much more successful on the capital market than organisations that underestimate the importance of good corporate image.
- *It increases the products sales.* Undoubtedly, the ‘brand’ is very important for many customers when choosing the right product for them.
- *It helps in crises.* Any organisation can depend on a well-built and good image in times of crises.

Corporate Image is the wanted result, which is achievable by corporate identity by means of using company's philosophy, corporate design, corporate communications, corporate culture and product/services of the company.

3 SUMMARY

The idea of Public Relations is not a new concept, but public relations of various ‘shapes and forms’ have existed in the ancient past. Whenever there was a need to change or influence public opinion, we can speak of public relations. No matter how old the idea of public relations is, modern and professional public relations as we perceive the meaning today are the matter of 20th century – of the year 1923 when the first theoretical book of public relations *Crystallizing Public Opinion* was published. Since then, public relations have been evolving till they became an important and enormous part of everyday life of today’s world – and not only business life. Some techniques which public relations developed might be questionable, because some of them may seem as passing the thin line between ethical and unethical.

Public relations are sometimes compared to promotion or advertising, but as shown in this work they have not much in common – as Philip Kotler shrewdly observed: “Whereas advertising is something you pay for, public relations are something you pray for.” The main difference between PR and advertising is the fact, that organisations hardly ever have any control over the message in the media, at least not as much as they do in advertising.

In short, public relations could be defined as ‘maintaining good relations with public’, which include both internal public (e.g. employees) and external public (e.g. customers, government, general public).

What might be considered to be relatively new in public relations is the usage of mass media to convey the desired information to the general public. Therefore, media relations became a vital part of public relations. People often mistakenly think that PR is based only on communication with journalists/media, which is not true. Media Relations is the subspecialty of Public Relations, although it makes up about 80 percent of PR work. Having good relationship with media is the best and most effective way for creating a positive organisation image. The way the organisation is perceived by the media is the way how the media describe the organisation to the general public.

Having well-managed media relations really pays off when it comes to a crisis. Therefore it is vital to be building good relations with media before a crisis appears, because reacting just after the crisis appears is usually too late. It is wise to realize that where there is a good crisis communication plan, no crisis can really burst out and also having a successful corporate identity and corporate image can help to get over any crisis without ‘losing face’.

II. ANALYSIS

4 METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES

In the analytical part I focus on speeches or interviews given by American politicians. In the analysis I would like to point out how a well-prepared speech or interview can help the speaker to gain the desired effect and help them in their cause, or how a well-aimed and skilful speech or answer can put things in a completely different light. It is vital to realize, that no matter what the facts and figures are, skilful and experienced speakers can usually put these facts and figures in such an order and such a context, that the output from their speech turns out to be completely opposite than we might expect at first.

I elaborate on audio or video examples that I enclose on a CD. These examples are chosen with no regard to my own political views and I elaborate and evaluate only the performance of speakers not the speakers themselves or their political views or ideology. When cited from an example, the time when the citation appeared in the example, is provided in brackets after the citation.

I am also going to introduce an example of crisis communication from real life, when the crisis is not handled very well at the beginning, mainly because of providing misleading facts and figures. However, with a newly hired professional crisis communication strategist, this crisis ends quite successfully for the organisation.

Firstly, I focus my attention to an example from a film, although I am well aware of the fact, that cinema and real life are two different things, but I believe that film can sometimes show the real life as well. The chosen example tries to mirror the reality of PR communication and in this first example I show how a negative situation can be put in a different context to get a positive situation out of it.

Secondly, I analyse a speech given by a politician. What is peculiar for any speech is the fact that the speech can be prepared beforehand and such preparation can be done either by the speaker himself/herself or by a hired professional. No speech should be underestimated, because as I show in this analysis, a well-prepared speech can not only influence the audience, but under certain circumstances it can gain a full control. My objective is to point out devices (either rhetorical or lexical) which the speaker uses to catch the attention as well as strong and weak moments of this speech and I explain why I consider the given speech to be successful. I was able to acquire the example in audio format only; therefore I cannot analyse body language of the speaker. The transcript of the speech can be also found on the enclosed CD.

Thirdly, I focus on an analysis of a politician's appearance on television in a live interview. Interview with a media representative is more difficult than giving a speech. The main difference is in preparation. The interviewer is the one who is prepared in an interview and the interviewee is the one who is forced to face various questions with hardly any preparation. Although the interviewee does not know what questions are to be asked, they should not underestimate their preparation either – they should at least focus on possible questions, which might be asked, and prepare adequate answers. E.g. if the interviewee knows that they have a weak spot in their past or their present, they should be prepared to react on questions addressing their weak spots with no hesitation. I elaborate on two appearances by the same politician in two different television shows. Since I was not able to acquire the transcript of the first interview, only the transcript of the second interview can be found on the enclosed CD.

5 THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

As my first example I chose the opening scene from the movie directed by Jason Reitman *Thank You for Smoking* from 2005 (video-example no. 1). The whole movie deals with public relations communications and lobbying in the interest of a tobacco company. The opening scene displays a beginning of a talk show in a television studio. The guests of the show are three representatives of various organisations which are aimed against smoking, next guest is a 15-year old boy Robin who suffers from a tough kind of cancer caused by smoking and the last guest is the vice-president of the Academy of Tobacco Studies Nick Naylor, who is also the chief spokesman of the company.

In the beginning of the movie Nick Naylor is presented as a hated representative of a tobacco company (this introduction is not included in the video-example no. 1). He is well aware of that fact and that is why he needs to persuade the audience that he is not all that bad. Therefore, right in the beginning of the talk-show Nick interrupts by raising his hand and then he begins with a greatly prepared monologue which has the desired effect on the audience. This example is a great illustration of facts and figures being put in such a light, that the result of the monologue comes out as positive for the tobacco company. Thanks to this ‘facts-twisting’ the chief spokesman is able to get the audience to like him, despite their initial disregard and unfriendliness.

The spokesman builds his PR monologue on a shocking argument, that if the ‘cancer boy’ dies, the tobacco company “would be losing a customer” (00:25). From the point of view of logic, this argument seems to be completely right, because no company wants to lose its customer and if companies are threatened by losing customers, they usually make some effort not to lose them. However, by saying that a ‘dying boy’ equals ‘losing a customer’, the spokesman expresses that they do not care for the life of the boy that much and that they as a company only care for profit. The audience and the other guests are utterly bewildered by this shocking statement. Nonetheless, the spokesman goes on and he continues with his logical argument that every company/organisation is aimed at gaining profit and increasing their budget. Accordingly, the more people die because of smoking the higher budget for organisations that are campaigning against smoking. No matter how ridiculous the whole argument sounds, it is successively build on a simple rule that no company wants to lose a customer. Moreover, the spokesman even adds the fact, that the tobacco company is about to launch a campaign aimed at persuading kids not to smoke, which he underlines by his body language – open palms of his hands (01:00). Now the

audience is absolutely on his side and they even agree with the spokesman. Even the ‘cancer boy’ is persuaded and in the end he shakes hand with the tobacco company representative (see picture 2). The other guests are not able to react; probably because they underestimated the preparation and they do not expect such a statement.

By this example I wanted to show how the truth can be shifted by a

skilful and prepared spokesman, who knows how to control the audience and who can make the people see the facts from another perspective.



Picture 2. Screenshot from Thank You for Smoking by Jason Reitman

6 JOHN KERRY'S ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

As graduating from Yale University John Kerry volunteered to serve in Vietnam and on a Swift Boat in river deltas, one of the most dangerous assignments of the war, and afterwards he was awarded a Silver Star, a Bronze Star and three Purple Hearts. Thanks to his military past, which he often reminded during his campaign, and experience democrat John Kerry gained a lot of supporters when he ran for the post of President of the United States in 2004.

In 1982 John Kerry was elected Lieutenant Governor and in this office he mainly fought against polluting U.S. water supplies. In 1984 he was elected to the United States Senate and since then “he has won re-election three times and he is now serving his fourth term, after winning again in 2002.” (John Kerry, online)

After events in September 11th, 2001 John Kerry “has been a leading voice on American policy in Iraq and Afghanistan, the war on terrorism, the Middle East peace process and Israel’s security. (John Kerry, online)

In 2004 at the Democratic National Convention he gave an interesting speech, which I would like to look deeper into now.

The purpose of John Kerry’s acceptance speech (audio-example no. 1, acquired from www.americanrhetoric.com) is clear: presidential candidate officially accepts his candidature for the post of the president of the United States and he also tries to persuade his audience, his potential voters, the American general public, to vote for him and show him their support. I have to say that this speech is quite remarkable and in my opinion it must have been a big success for Kerry and I think he might have gained few more supporters thanks to this speech.

In my analysis I am going to address the specific moments, which I perceived to be most powerful, remarkable, or where Kerry used special lexical or psychological devices to get the desired effect. On the other hand, I noticed few things in the speech which are not quite alright and I would like to elaborate on them as well. Some of the main, traditional, topics



Picture 3. John Kerry

Source:

<http://newcm.wordpress.com>

mentioned in the speech are Iraq war and terrorism, family values, social security and job security, economy, taxes or U.S. energy dependence on foreign countries, because American voters are interested mainly in these exact topics.

The speech is well-written right from the start, because in the very first lines Kerry clearly lays out the main point of him giving the speech: "...we're here tonight united in one purpose: to make America stronger at home and respected in the world." (00:45) With this simple statement followed by applause he set off to start a successful speech. Moreover, John Kerry devotes first minutes to introduce himself, to tell the audience personal information about himself and his family, for the audience to get to know him better and to perceive him as a person not just as a politician. He was also able to implement environmental and gender issues into his initial introduction, when talking about his mother he said: "She gave me her passion for the environment. She taught me to see the trees as the cathedrals of nature. And by the power of her example, she showed me that we can and must complete the march towards full equality for all women in the United States of America." (03:16)

The whole speech is built on a strong wave of American's patriotism as well as family values. I know from my personal experience that American patriotism is very strong and it is rooted in most American citizens. The most powerful symbol of the United States patriotism is their flag and Americans are very proud of their 'stars and stripes'. On one occasion Kerry even brings the attention to a flag hanging nearby: (25:25)

You see that flag up there. We call her Old Glory. The Stars and Stripes forever. I fought under that flag, as did so many of those people who are here tonight and all across the country. That flag flew from the gun turret right behind my head. And it was shot through and through and tattered, but it never ceased to wave in the wind. It draped the caskets of men that I served with and friends I grew up with. For us that flag is the most powerful symbol of who we are and what we believe in. Our strength. Our diversity. Our love of country. All that makes America both great and good.

John Kerry is well-aware of strong patriotic feelings of his fellow Americans. Therefore, he strikes just the right note by the above words and such a statement once again is followed by a big round of applause. In my opinion that was a good move – Kerry aims directly at his audience and he tells them what they want to hear. However, some more perceptive

listeners could reveal this trick played on the string of patriotism, because Kerry comes back to the symbol of flag on many more occasions, which becomes a little bit too pushing after a while.

Because of Kerry's enthusiasm and passion the speech is strongly emotionally appealing and that is a good strategy to influence and even control the crowd. The passionate tone combined with usage of Kerry's favourite device - lexical repetition, is a 'deadly weapon' and Kerry uses it quite often. He uses repetition of words, phrases, clauses and sentences and by doing so he structures his text and focuses attention on the very specific content. As the most striking example of lexical repetition can serve his statements beginning with "What does it mean..." after which he introduces a serious contemporary problem of the U.S. After the problem he concludes with: "America can do better. Help is on the way." (from 29:52 to 31:35) There is a total of five statements build in such a manner and as Kerry proceeds with his speech we can hear the audience starting to join in to repeat the latter slogan. We could say that in this moment Kerry controls the crowd completely and the audience is absolutely on his side. There is one more trick he uses in this part of the speech. He mentions ordinary people who have some troubles, people "that he met in the streets" and he mentions them by their full name, by which he brings logically-based arguments into his speech and makes clear that he is in contact with ordinary people and that he knows what the ordinary people have on mind when going to vote.

Another example of repetition are Kerry's remarks about the American flag and in these remarks he even adds climax in the last sentence: "That flag doesn't belong to any president. It doesn't belong to any ideology. It doesn't belong to any party. It belongs to all the American people." (26:06)

When talking about the problems of the U.S. economy Kerry probably could not have performed better. He chooses to address the problems directly and with no hesitation. He comes with a clear and brief plan to build a stronger America. Moreover, he divides his plan into three clear points so that his statement is easily understandable for every American.

What I consider to be a weak spot in the speech is when he indirectly criticises his opponent George W. Bush. He never says his opponent's name out loud; however from the context, facts and the structure of the speech it is obvious what he is talking about. E.g. his statement that "since 2000, four million people have lost their health insurance, Millions

more are struggling to afford it. You know what's happening.” (35:55) He never says it is fault of the president George W. Bush; on the other hand everybody knows that the year 2000 was the year when Bush administration started to operate.

Kerry says that he will “start telling the truth to the American people,” (07:05) and that “as president, I will restore trust and credibility to the White House.” (07:24) These remarks are quite interesting when listened to by an astute and thoughtful listener. John Kerry implies that White House (President) has no trust and credibility among the public. With the former remark he even implies that White House does not tell the truth to the American people. Considering Bill Clinton’s affair we might agree that the American President used to have problems with telling the truth; however Kerry’s remarks are also addressed to his contemporary president George W. Bush. I would say that Kerry is dancing on a thin ice with such charges and should the ice have broken he might have had some serious problems, such as being sued.

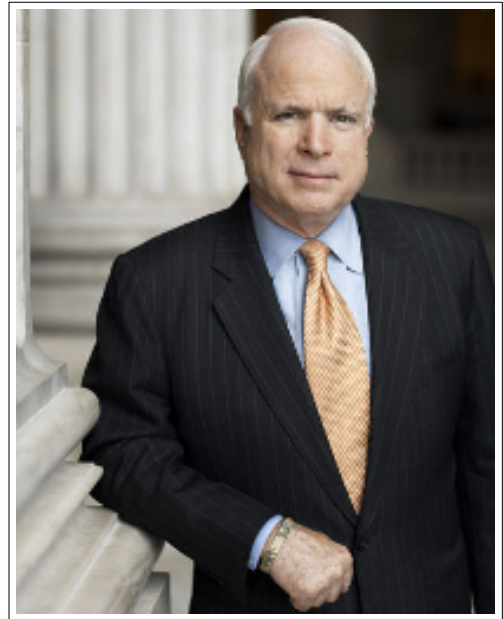
When speaking about the war in Iraq John Kerry uses the chance to criticize George W. Bush and his administration once again by his statement that he “will be a commander in chief who will never mislead us [U.S.A.] into war,” (08:20) by which Kerry once again implies that Bush is responsible for the negative development in Iraq and he accuses Bush of misleading America in war.

In conclusion, I think it is a well-written speech and a nice example of well-prepared political rhetoric. Although I would slightly disagree with the way how Kerry indirectly criticises George W. Bush, because I think that such implications as made by him are a bit dangerous and could have turned against him. However, the purpose of this speech was to inform the audience about John Kerry’s views and ideas, to influence the audience to vote for John Kerry and to persuade the public to be against his opponent.

7 JOHN MCCAIN

In 2000, Senator John McCain ran unsuccessfully for the Republican nomination for President of the United States. However, he did not give up and in 2008 he is once again one of the candidates for President of the U.S. and we could say that he is much closer to become the most powerful man of the world.

This U.S. Senator has a long career of public service. He began his career as naval aviator, after graduating from the Naval Academy in 1958. In 1982 he was elected to Congress representing congressional district of Arizona and in 1986 he was elected to the United States Senate. Currently he is senior senator from Arizona, and the Ranking



Picture 4. John McCain

Source: <http://weblogs.newsday.com>

Member of the Senate Committee on Armed Services. He also serves on the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, and the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. (United States Senator John McCain, online)

7.1 Late Show with David Letterman

As my other video I chose John McCain's appearance on Late Show with David Letterman which aired on April 1, 2008 (video-example no. 2, acquired from www.ddy.com). The show starts in a very informal and friendly atmosphere when the two men exchange few harmless insults on each other. Maybe because of this unexpected beginning of the show I had the feeling that I was watching a 'chat' between two friends rather than a formal political discussion. The show is filled with humour, which is, of course, highly appreciated by the audience. However, later on in the show they moved to more serious contemporary issues such as national credit crisis, U.S. economy, Iraq war and both American and Iraqi casualties, or the U.S. prison for terrorist suspects at Guantanamo Bay. Right after McCain's appearance on the stage (01:00) we can see a very interesting body language being sent out by him – he has no idea what to do with his hands. He does not seem as a very confident and self-assured person in this introductory part and he tries to mask this awkward moment by imitating David Letterman and his body language which

is quite relaxed and relieved. On the other hand, later on in the show John McCain is very persuasive and we can see that he knows ‘how to talk’ as well as he knows how to control his body language. This introductory part feels to be more for the audience and for the camera rather than a natural discussion between two people, because the two hardly ever maintain any eye-contact; later on in the show they seem more natural, because they do maintain eye-contact.

John McCain is in a good mood and his self-assurance and self-confidence is obvious. Right in the beginning of the interview he points out how confident he is with his communication and speech skills: “... I can hardly wait, as president of the United States to watch me on great speeches... that’s a treat I’m looking forward to.” (03:35) And I have to admit that in the show McCain seems really relieved and relaxed and looks like he perfectly knows what he is saying and doing.

David Letterman asks McCain few tricky questions which, if answered inconsiderably, might represent potential troubles for McCain. However, the senator skilfully answers those questions with hardly any hesitation and in such a way, that he is the one who looks good for providing such answers – e.g. when Letterman asks McCain about the two other candidates Hilary Clinton and Barack Obama: “Is there one or the other that you really would run against or is there one that you are worried about? Would you rather run against Hilary or Barack?” (10:20) This question ‘interpreted’ might sound: “Who do you find more competent/incompetent to be president of the U.S.?” McCain does not fall into this trap, where he could start complaining about his competitors, and he starts to answer the question by his body language even before Letterman finishes his question – by shaking his head; later he clearly says “no, it does not matter” and in the same breath he adds that “Americans want and I [John McCain] will conduct a respectful campaign.” This statement, which I personally find as almost crossing the line to populism, gains loud applause from the audience and McCain is very well-aware of that. He mentions one more populist issue on more occasions – unnecessary spending, wasting money, cutting campaign costs. People always hear and listen when it comes to money. McCain jokingly comments on spending three million dollars on studying DNA of Montana bears: “I don’t know if that was a paternity issue or a criminal issue.” (08:15) He also personally serves as a good example by emphasising that he himself cuts costs of his campaign by flying regular airlines. (04:45)

What might be considered as another trick played by Letterman was when asking about the future of the American economy, whether to be hopeful or not at all. (16:00) This is a typical yes/no question to which McCain avoids to give a direct yes or no answer, but instead he starts speaking about strong fundamentals of American economy, innovation or information technology, by which he only implies that there is a reason to be hopeful, but he still does not want to give direct yes-answer to avoid potential future problems.

To conclude, John McCain's performance on David Letterman's show was successful for him and it might have won him few more votes, because in the end of the show McCain uses the opportunity and promotes himself as a better and more suitable candidate for the American president by bringing attention to three contemporary problematic issues – global climate change, torture of people under U.S. custody and Guantanamo Bay.

Another strong weapon in McCain's possession is humour and he uses it quite a lot during the interview; such as when talking about latest approval rating of the Congress which, according to McCain, is 19 percent he says, that "you get down to blood relatives and paid staffers and you get down to that low approval rating." (11:30) Moreover, he is able to make fun of himself as a natural part of his speech without losing the flow of the interview. For instance when McCain answers Letterman's question, why he has failed as a candidate for presidential post in 2000, he answers with humour and no hesitation, that he "was probably a lousy candidate." (04:18)

7.2 Meet the Press with Tim Russert

As another video I chose John McCain's interview with Tim Russert in Meet the Press which aired on May 13, 2007 (video-example no. 3, acquired from www.msnbc.msn.com). Compared to the previous video with David Letterman on Late Show this debate is held in a much more formal and official way with all the jokes and humour aside; although John McCain tries to start the interview with a joke, Tim Russert gets over instantly and goes right to the interview. Among the issues discussed were war in Iraq, immigration or possible tax cuts in the future.

In this show John McCain also has to face the yes/no question, whether "it was a good idea to go into Iraq?" (02:55) McCain is clever enough to avoid simple yes or no question and even when Russert asks once more, McCain once again refuses to give black or white answer.

Quite an unpleasant trick which McCain has to cope with is when he has to face his own arguments from 1993 against U.S. military presence in Somalia that he used in the past and that can now be used against his contemporary ideology about Iraq war. (18:10) Russert wisely uses his words without saying beforehand that the statement cited is McCain's. Russert admits that those words are McCain's just after McCain discredits his own statement. Therefore, in this case senator faces a 'double trick' played by Russert, because McCain has actually just discredited himself. However, McCain is able to cope with the situation quite well, when he claims the two operations (Iraq vs. Somalia) are comparable in no way. Moreover, he is able to respond to the statements right after they are told, with confidence and no hesitation. In my opinion this moment is quite a well-prepared game played by Russert, because no matter how great McCain's answer is, it undermines senator's authority and credibility in general public; and what was once said, in this case also aired on television, cannot be ever taken back. We can also read from McCain's body language that this situation is not pleasing for him, because every time he is forced to face an unpleasant question he sits up to show interest as well as to gain some extra time to think about his answer. As far as I am concerned, this 'double-trick' is good work performed by an experienced journalist, because it is a journalist's job to reveal hidden connections and discover other perspectives.

Another interesting moment comes when Russert quotes McCain's statements from previous years about progress and success achieved in Iraq. The journalist deliberately picks out only few similar statements which claim, that Iraqi operation is a success and that progress is being made. (20:20) Other quotes that could help to draw the whole picture are omitted on purpose to serve the desired purpose of the journalist. Once again, even though McCain added his other statements, which balanced it out a bit, the viewer has already been influenced.

Later on in the show while discussing the topic of immigration, McCain does not miss the opportunity to promote himself as being a suitable person for the post of the president of the United States, when he points out that he as a republican has also no problem working with democrats. "And that's why I [John McCain] think I'm prepared to be president of the United States. The American people want us to work together on issues that are important to the American people. That's my record." (30:35) Just few minutes later he is still in his presidential-campaign-role when he emphasises the fact that he is a great candidate once more. When talking about making tough decisions and cooperating

with democrats, in the same breath he adds, that “that's what I [John McCain] intend to do as president of the United States, and I am prepared to do.” (36:20) About a minute later he still continues bringing to attention his bipartisan efforts and his ability to address tough issues, which I already perceive a little too ‘pushy’, as if he could not say a sentence without campaigning at the same time. Pieces of information can be classified as to-the-topic information (which means answering the given question by giving relevant information) or off-the-topic information (which means answering by giving less relevant additional information). When McCain answers the questions he is always trying to add the off-the-topic information of his presidential campaign.

Another issue that McCain and Russert discuss is the issue of ethanol and McCain’s views and opinions on ethanol. The problem is the fact, that in 2005 McCain was against ethanol claiming that “ethanol does nothing to reduce fuel consumption, nothing to increase our energy independence, nothing to improve air quality” (40:35); after a year in 2006 he supports ethanol as being a vital alternative energy source. His complete change of mind has one clear explanation: ethanol is a very important issue in the state of Iowa, because economic prosperity of this agricultural state is dependant on ethanol production. Consequently, for McCain to win the presidential caucuses there is a strong need to become an ethanol-supporter. When Russert implies that there is a connection between McCain’s about-turn and Iowa caucuses (43:55), McCain is surprised and he cannot answer such a statement, but at least he ensures the journalist and the audience, that he does what he believes is right. For a brief moment we can read from his face-expression that he ‘is lost’ and he did not expect such a statement; after he realises that his facial expressions give him away he tries to add a smile, but it is obvious that he fakes it, because he is probably well-aware of the fact that smile is a good sign, thou I personally do not believe in this smile. It is quite a pity that the journalist does not go on with his questions; because I think it could have been quite interesting watching McCain’s reactions on this issue.

7.3 Conclusion from John McCain’s performance

There is no doubt that John McCain is a skilful, trained and experienced talker. What I find to be one of his greatest advantages is his ability to implement humour and jokes into his talks quite naturally. As far as his body language is concerned, he sends out positive signals

and he stresses out the important issues by both his body language and his voice. What is quite typical not only for McCain but other public speakers as well is the open-palms-of-his-hands gesture and McCain uses this gesture to gain trust of the audience. Quite an impressive thing about John McCain is also his ability to say “I don’t know” which is mainly noticeable in his appearance in Meet the Press interview.

8 EXAMPLE OF CRISIS COMMUNICATION

World's leading big corporations, smaller companies, politician and probably everyone at least a little involved in business world knows how important it is to have a positive image in the public and that having a professional public relations consultant is a good start to achieve that goal. For that very reason there are specialised public relations agencies around the world which know exactly how to strike the right note at the right time. One of such agencies working in the field of public affairs and corporate communications is the company Singer Associates, Inc. and its president Sam Singer. In the following case we can see how an organisation mishandled its crisis at first, because of lying and providing inaccurate information just after the crisis appeared. However, after hiring a professional crisis communication worker the crisis started to be less painful for the organisation.

Singer Associates, Inc. provides corporate communications, public relations, crisis communications and advertising for some of the nation's leading corporations, trade associations, government agencies, cultural institutions and non-profits (Singer Associates, online).

The company's president Sam Singer is one of the well-known corporate reputation and communications strategists and he has more than 20 years experience working with corporations, governments, non-profit organisations and trade associations in developing their public relations and crisis management. He is a former political campaign manager and journalist, so he knows how to deal with a media representative since he used to be one of them (Singer Associates, online).

One of Singer's many cases dealing with crisis communication was San Francisco's Zoo crisis, when a Siberian tiger escaped from its enclosure and killed one boy and injured two others. Right after the attack the zoo was not able to provide information on how such an accident could have happened, but what leaked in the public was the fact that the wall which the beast leapt over was 1.2 meters lower than recommended for such enclosures (Selna, online). Moreover, right after the attack the director of the zoo was not able to answer journalists' questions about the height of the wall and instead of admitting that he does not know the exact figure, he gave the journalists an inaccurate figure, which is a great example of mishandling post-crisis situation.

Few days after the tragedy, new information appeared: that the victims were taunting the animal, therefore the attack was provoked and that the victims themselves unintentionally helped the tiger to escape; that vodka bottle was found in the victims' car and that they had slingshots in their possession at the time of the attack. According to San Francisco Chronicle a source for those new facts "is widely considered to be Sam Singer" (Selna, online), the newly hired spokesman. Singer denied him being the source of such rumours, he just commented that "those are all things that San Francisco police are investigating, and that's fact" (Selna, online). Being an experienced PR worker Singer does not deny reminding journalists the rumours he hears, because he knows that those rumours influence public opinion. On the other hand, the vodka bottle and marijuana has been confirmed as being true since then, but the slingshots have not (Selna, online). Every PR worker knows that by kicking up some dust and spreading rumours they can ease the difficult position of their client in a crisis.

What Sam Singer did was that he adopted a new strategy to handle the crisis. He wanted to turn the attention from the zoo officials to the victims and that is why the questions about teasing the animal appeared in the press. This strategy paid off and headlines in the press started to question the victims' behaviour, rather than the competence of the zoo officials. Luckily for Singer, some of the rumours he passed on turned out to be true. The zoo also admitted that the wall was lower than national recommendations. However, in the same breath they added that the tiger would not have attacked unless being provoked.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

Managers, politicians as well as journalists are trained to conduct a successful and professional speech or interview and they know why it is that important. By going public in the media, they can create their own identity and their own image, which is later on supported by the media, or in the worse case, they can be painfully discredited which does not help their business or political career.

How to give a successful speech or to handle an interview successfully? We can conclude few recommendations to do so. It is vital that you do not underestimate the preparation for either an interview or a speech. Therefore, the speaker needs to know the audience and also anticipate what the audience might be interested in; for that reason choose the right topic. In the preparatory part the speaker also needs to prepare for unexpected and difficult questions that might arise. Another recommendation is that unless the speech or an interview is for rocket scientists, it should be kept simple and easy to understand. Moreover, before giving the actual speech or an interview it is wise to rehearse it and to have key notes written.

When conducting a speech or an interview the speaker needs to sound confident and trustworthy and he or she should also vary the tone and volume to catch the attention of their audience. He or she should also be brief and accurate to maintain the attention. Furthermore, brief and simple slogans send a message that is easier to remember; e.g. 'Help is on the way' in Kerry's acceptance speech. In addition, if passion is added to the speech (also in Kerry's acceptance speech), the performance will emotionally appeal to the audience and they will enjoy the speech as well. In McCain's performance we could see how humour helped him to look relaxed, relieved and natural. On the other hand, he was able to stop and say 'let's be serious now' when discussing more serious topics. When talking about body language the speakers usually know fair amount of theory about this topic and they can as well use it. E. g. the gesture of open-hand is a widely used gesture to gain trust and credibility in the audience. Subconsciously, people translate this gesture and the speaker is then perceived as being honest and trustworthy. However, if the speaker uses any of the rules and recommendations too much, the audience uncovers the trick and will not fall for it.

The ending of every speech or interview is not to be underestimated as well. Nothing kills a successful performance more than a mishandled finish. Therefore it is necessary to stay

in role till you are off the stage. At the end of the speech it is polite to thank the audience for listening.

Every speaker and every company or organisation should also know, that they should not lie, because truth is usually revealed sooner or later and by telling lies the speaker loses his or her credibility and creates a negative image in public. E. g. in the case of the zoo crisis lying was revealed and it made the situation even worse. Professional crisis communication worker, Sam Singer, is well aware of this no-lying rule and that is why has ended the lies and has come with a different strategy.

CONCLUSION

By my bachelor thesis I wanted to point out how public relations and the ability to give speeches or interviews is important and therefore it should not be underestimated, because media do influence today's society. If a businessperson or a politician wants to influence general public, media are a great way to do so.

While working out the thesis I encountered one big problem – it is quite impossible to find the performances of public relations workers or of spokespersons on the Internet, which is why I used the appearances of politicians instead.

Firstly, I introduced theoretical knowledge about public relations and its historical development and I also pointed out main differences between public relations and promotion. Secondly, I elaborate on the theory of media relations, part of public relations, and that media relations became a vital part of public relations, because of the enormous expansion of mass media. Last but not least I focus my attention of the crisis communication.

By the analysis of interviews and speeches I wanted to show that the theoretical knowledge is also used in real life interviews and speeches. I found out that quite a favourite device to make the performance better and more appealing is lexical repetition, which confirms the rule about repeating yourself while giving a speech or an interview. Next thing is to make the performance easy to understand for everybody by being clear and brief, which some Czech politicians should finally realize. Final conclusion is the fact, that the body language and the actual spoken language must be saying the same and if there is a discrepancy between those two languages, listeners usually subconsciously trust the body language rather than the actual words.

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LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figures

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Corporate identity structure | 21 |
| 2. Screenshot from <i>Thank You for Smoking</i> by Jason Reitman | 29 |
| 3. John Kerry | 30 |
| 4. John McCain | 34 |

Tables

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Comparison of public relations and advertising | 11 |
|---|----|