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ANTI-CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT

This scientific article deals with the analysis of the existing crisis management theories. The role and tasks of anti-crisis communications in crisis phenomena overcoming are defined. Anti-crisis communications are considered as one of the anti-crisis management areas. The world experience of anti-crisis programs development and the up-to-date methods for elaborating anti-crisis programs are analyzed. The evaluation of Ukrainian anti-crisis programs is given. Effective practical techniques for preventing crises are identified.

Key words: anti-crisis communications, management, crisis, anti-crisis program.

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АНТИКРИЗОВІ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ В УПРАВЛІННІ КРИЗОВИМИ ЯВИЩАМИ

У науковій статті наведено аналіз наявних теорій антикризового управління. Розкрито зміст і завдання антикризових комунікацій у подоланні кризових явищ. Розглянуто антикризові комунікації, як один із напрямів антикризового менеджменту. Проаналізовано світовий досвід створення антикризових програм і виокремлено новітні інструменти побудови антикризових програм. Подано оцінку вітчизняним антикризовим програмам. Виділено ефективні практичні інструменти запобігання кризовим явищам.

Ключові слова: антикризові комунікації, управління, криза, антикризова програма.

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АНТИКРИЗИСНЫЕ КОММУНИКАЦИИ В УПРАВЛЕНИИ КРИЗИСНЫМИ ЯВЛЕНИЯМИ

В научной статье приведен анализ существующих теорий антикризисного управления. Раскрыты содержание и задания антикризисных коммуникаций в преодолении кризисных явлений. Рассмотрены антикризисные коммуникации, как одно из направлений антикризисного менеджмента. Проанализирован мировой опыт создания антикризисных программ и выделены новые инструменты построения антикризисных программ. Дана оценка отечественным антикризисным программам. Выделены эффективные практические инструменты недопущения кризисных явлений.

Ключевые слова: антикризисные коммуникации, управление, кризис, антикризисная программа.

Formulation of the problem. Despite the considerable practical and research experience in the use of anti-crisis communications, Ukrainian studies in this area are almost non-existent. Anti-crisis communications should aim at timely preventing a negative public perception of the company, which affects the decline in popularity ratings and impairment of image. In addition, some of the crises can lead to environmental or man-made disasters, social upheavals or human losses. Thus, the use of techniques for crisis management, and the work to prevent crises, is part of the social responsibility of business and the state.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The theorists of social philosophy – R. Guardini, E. Husserl, G. Simmel, X. Ortega-i-Gasset, A. S. Akhieser, N. Berdyaev, S. Bulgakov, V. Solovyov paid considerable attention to the cultural, spiritual and philosophical crises. Applied research on crisis and crisis management, described in works by I. Ansoff, S. Purba, D. Zuckerro, is very important for understanding the approaches to crisis management. The questions of public relations in crisis situations were studied by S. Black, S. Catlip, A. Center, H. Brum, F. Zeitel, J. Marconi, F. Kotler, P. Lagadek et al.

The aim of the paper is to study the role and significance of anti-crisis communications in the crisis management system. To achieve the aim, you need to solve the following tasks:



- to determine already known anti-crisis communications in the management of crisis phenomena and describe the latest anti-crisis methods;
- to study the methodology for preventing crisis phenomena;
- to identify the peculiarities of communications in crisis periods and to identify ways to overcome the shortcomings of anti-crisis communications;
- analyze the state of anti-crisis programs in Ukrainian business.

Presentation of main material. From the point of view of crisis management, the crisis or fasten ordinary processes, or causes the emergence of extraordinary situations. The crisis is characterized by an increase in uncertainty, and preventive measures play a key role in overcoming the crisis. That is, crisis management is to take a number of rapid measures to overcome the crisis, as well as in organizing the implementation of emergency measures.

From the middle of the twentieth century the pace of the macro- and, in particular, mega-processes in systems of different types and levels of operation has become faster significantly, and the probability of crises and its spread has increased. Therefore, the time to develop anti-crisis measures after the onset of crisis phenomena may not be enough, but these measures must be carried out continuously or scheduled in advance [1, p. 102–105].

Consequently, anti-crisis measures are not only a reaction to certain crises that have already come about, but precautionary measures. On this basis, crisis management should have the following orientation:

- Prevention of crisis phenomena, crises.
- Advance detection of crisis situations using a set of indicators.
- Prevention of crisis phenomena to overcome them at the very beginning.

At the beginning of the crisis, the communication group should prepare differentiated information intended for: society as a whole, shareholders and investors of the company, agents working with company securities, financial analysts, company employees, state administration [2, p. 76].

The combination of the main methodological aspects of anti-crisis management of an enterprise allows us to formulate its concept as follows:

crisis management is a constant process of observation, detection (according to certain features), localization of crisis phenomena, prevention of crisis situations, and in case of their onset – overcoming with the use of methods, resources and reserves that are appropriate for a particular situation, the result of which is a stable activity of the enterprise

This concept of crisis management is the basis for solving the following tasks:

- 1) determination of the totality of subprocesses of observation, identification of certain features, localization of crisis phenomena, prevention of crisis situations, identification of their features, forms of implementation;
- 2) determination of the methods of observation, the detection of certain features, the localization of crisis phenomena, prevention of crisis situations;
- 3) the formation of a set of standard situations in which observation can occur, detection of certain features, localization of crisis phenomena, prevention of crisis situations;
- 4) determination of resources and reserves, which should be used for observation, detection of certain features, localization of crisis phenomena, prevention of crisis situations, and at their onset – overcoming;
- 5) determining the signs of the stability of the system, which should be distinguished from stagnation [3, p. 104].

At the same time, the process of crisis management can not be standardized. Each crisis situation is unique and requires the appropriate approach. Any set of rules or tools that is too narrowly adjusted to the requirements of a hypothetical crisis scenario will have a fairly limited practical value if there is a real crisis.

If the management system is based on the basic principles and methodology, it can effectively respond to a wide range of different crises. Hence, the skills necessary to respond to the crisis can be developed and improved by simulation. This simulation, reproducing real crisis situations, is a kind of strength test for management programs.

There is a need to understand the relationship between crisis management and issues management: the latter is the first unit necessary to prevent or control potential crises. This is to prevent a crisis situation.

Problem management is a continuous process of building corporate behaviour in line with the expectations of stakeholders. Problems become crises when there is no such match. By prior identification of risks, prioritization of priorities and thorough monitoring of their evolution, problems can be managed changing the behaviour of the company or the expectations of stakeholders, either both.

The crisis can not be overcome in the absence of a clear plan of action. In the first place, a plan of measures minimizes the probability of a crisis situation. In addition, it has already been noted that the practice of foreign companies has such a prerequisite as the availability of a plan, including clear instructions for departments in the event of an extraordinary situation. S. Black offers six stages of preparing a crisis plan:

1. Analysis of a possible set of problems.
2. Preparation of the plan.



3. Team selection.
4. Providing means of communication.
5. Training.
6. Business games [4, p. 105].

The round-the-clock loading of such a team should be borne in mind, since most of the crises, disasters, and natural disasters occur at night or on weekends. At the same time, training and business games should take place with the participation of law enforcement agencies and local authorities in order to get as close as possible to the real situation [5, p. 493].

A member of the British Institute of Public Relations, P. Green, determines four directions for effective anti-crisis PR program:

1. Identification of risk areas.
2. Prevention of crises (through changes based on previous identification of risk areas).
3. Training (to be able to act quickly when a crisis occurs).
4. Own crisis management [6, p. 138].

According to P. Green, such program with the prior identification of crisis areas can prevent a large number of crises, as many of them have poor management due to their cause [7, p. 139-142].

According to Ogilvy PR specialists, „Problem Management Program» should include eight steps:

1. „Identification: What problems can arise based on the specifics of the industry or scale of the company?
2. Prioritization / classification: which of these risks can cause significant damage to the reputation or activity of the company if they are not managed effectively?
3. Monitoring: How does this problem develop monthly or even daily?
4. Preparation: how can we predict the direction of the situation and develop an action plan?
5. Action: what steps can we take to change the direction of the problem?
6. Reaction to the problem / crisis: how to react if the problem becomes a crisis that threatens the business of the company?
7. Score: Did we react effectively to the problem, preventing its evolution from the crisis? What lessons did we take?

8. Reclassification: Has the severity of the problem diminished over time? Is it still a progressive threat? [8].

Consequently, anti-crisis measures are a necessity for any enterprise or company and require active action from participants in a crisis situation. The goal of anti-crisis communications is to prevent the public's negative perception of the company in a timely manner, which leads to a decrease in the popularity rating and impairment of the image.

Consequently, in contemporary science there is no consensus that an anti-crisis management and its program are represented. To date, two main directions have emerged: tactical crisis management and strategic crisis management. Each of them involves developing an anti-crisis program (action plan), but the content of such plans is different.

Anti-crisis tactical program is being developed and implemented during a crisis or with its first signs. Such an approach can be considered short-sighted, since in the event of a crisis, there is no time to analyze the situation, make decisions and develop a strategy. Consequently, there is a high probability of mistakes in developing the tactics of the anti-crisis campaign, as there is no detailed analysis and strategy.

Anti-crisis programs should never stop, and their basis should be the anti-crisis program as a strategic document. This program should aim not only to overcome the crisis, but also its prevention and competent post-crisis response (strategic anti-crisis management).

The most important thing is the speed of reaction of the company management to the crisis situation. The more complete the information is given, the more open the company, the better its relations with the media, the more effective it will be in addressing the difficult situation.

Another condition for the success of anti-crisis programs is the communication strategy developed in advance. That is, the solution of the problem should not be a temporary task of the Public Relations Department – it should be a permanent work of this unit. Only then the company will be ready when the hard times really come.

Such an approach was proved to be effective. The best example is the communication policy of the international Philips Company. Faced with the problem of reducing profits, the impossibility of obtaining bank loans and the need to restructure the business and reduce staff, the company's administration set the goal of preventing panic in any Philips representation. A program was developed in which the information on the current state of the company was publicly disclosed and top management was called to take this situation seriously and calmly. At the same time, the managers took into account the need for both external communications (media, partners, clients) and internal (management and personnel), which is also an extremely important condition for a properly constructed anti-crisis PR strategy [9].

Possibilities of crisis management in post-Soviet countries are not used enough. This is proved by daily news releases. Particularly problematic is the use of anti-crisis techniques in the system of state management and com-



munications. The ambiguity of understanding its essence, the inability (and sometimes unwillingness) to use the world's developments in this area often hurt the reputation of the company.

Taking into account the active development of the sphere of public relations in Ukraine, interest in anti-crisis communications has grown recently.

At the same time, characterizing the situation regarding anti-crisis communications in Ukraine, it should be noted that most small and medium-sized companies do not deal with crisis prevention and do not make operational plans in the event of crises. The crisis management response plan is available from foreign / international companies as it is a mandatory requirement and a standard for the work of a Western enterprise. In part, such documentation is available at ministries and departments, including the Ministry of Emergency Situations, in enterprises related to hazardous industries. However, they relate to the elimination of the consequences of accidents and natural disasters and have no communication direction. Therefore, when a crisis situation arises, individuals who must provide information and contact the media face:

- Lack of a competent speaker (a person who has objective and complete information and is ready to provide it to the public, and also has the appropriate official authority).
- Inability to determine the reason for a speech.
- Uncertainty about the limits of disclosure of information.

Accordingly, such companies are not ready to respond adequately to crisis situations, do not allow the thought of the possibility of their occurrence. If the crisis situation arises, a so-called „emergency response plan» is developed. Crisis programs of strategic direction are developed only by large companies, most often with foreign investments [10].

Any self-respecting top-manager should create an anti-crisis program that will prevent probable problems at the stage of strategy development. An important and financial aspect of the expediency of the anti-crisis program: the „rehabilitation» of the crisis is estimated at \$ 50 to 100 thousand per week (depending on the situation), while having an anti-crisis program (an algorithm of actions) at hand, the management can consciously and without panic minimize the consequences crisis for the company's image. Confirmation of this opinion and representatives of other domestic companies with foreign investments – «Coca-Cola», «Inter Brand Company», «British petroleum», «British American Tobacco», «Goodyear-Dunlop», «SUN InBev Ukraine», «IBM», «Soyuz Vitan», «AVK» [10].

However, owners of Ukrainian companies still want to solve business problems on their own. In the context of the economic crisis, they simply increase the requirements for top managers and relevant marketing departments or take control of their power. Refusing to the services of so-called crisis managers and communication specialists, companies are trying to save on anti-crisis PR. However, such an approach is far from always justified. Apart from the fact that the involved specialists have experience and specific knowledge, they are fully responsible for fulfilling the tasks. This can not be done by the head of the company, solving operational issues. They have a fresh look and can apply new approaches. In this case, often for the receipt of such services, the company does not even need to withdraw from circulation any funds – saved or even earned on the results of the work done money repeatedly and quickly pay off such support.

Representatives of the Ukrainian business are in no hurry to seek help from the crisis manager for psychological reasons: it is very difficult for them to believe that the company they created, put on their feet and succeeded is close to bankruptcy. Such owners have an inadequate assessment of their managerial abilities. Therefore, specialists in crisis management are attracted even when the company is in a deep crisis and it is almost impossible to bring it out of this condition.

Conclusions. Anti-crisis management is a necessity for any company or company and requires active action from participants in a crisis situation. Anti-crisis communications are one of the areas of crisis management, which, in the context of the crisis, is assigned the most important value. To date, two main directions have emerged. They are «tactical anti-crisis management» and «strategic anti-crisis management».

The main stages of the anti-crisis program should be: analysis of a possible set of problems, preparation of a plan, team selection, providing communication facilities, training, and business games.

The state of the modern crisis management in Ukrainian companies is characterized, which in general is quite primitive and situational. Strategic anti-crisis management takes place only in large business companies, and more often with foreign investments.

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