

SAFEKEEPING
COMPANY
REPUTATION
99 TIPS

WEBER SHANDWICK

Advocacy starts here.



1 Great reputations are not accidental

Reputation royalty are no longer invincible **3**

4 Stop the bleeding quickly

2 Good corporate reputation pays, bad reputation costs

5 CEOs must be the first line of defense

7 Instill a sense of urgency

6 Communicate in heavy doses — people are hungriest for information when times are tough

CEO apologies or regrets are expected **8**

9 Banish two words — “no comment”

10 A cover up is worse than the crime

11 Monitor employees' vital signs

Think of stakeholders as your electorate **12**

13 Don't underestimate your competitors or critics

14 Abandon any bunker mentality — make leadership accessible

Do not always turn the other cheek **15**

16 Enlist your board's experience

17 “Sunlight is the best disinfectant”
– U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis
(aka: Transparency is the best cure)

18 Shift focus from what has happened to what should happen next

To stabilize reputation, massive intervention is required **19**

20 Show concern for those affected

21 Don't believe your own propaganda

Reduce internal expectations and deadlines temporarily **22**

23 Keep an eye out for crisis fatigue from your team

Break recovery into easy to manage pieces **24**

25 Reputation is easiest to quantify when it is eroding or lost

26 Ask for Lessons Learned from those who have stumbled

27 Start up the research engine — measure consistently

Reputation halos blind companies to their inner demons **33**

34 Learn from failure. Don't waste a crisis

35 The public is much less forgiving today

Be prepared for the worst-case scenario **28**

29 Be there or be talked about

30 Buy unflattering domain names ASAP

Think of employees as embedded journalists **31**

32 Nearly all reputation loss is self-inflicted

33 Reputation halos blind companies to their inner demons

35 The public is much less forgiving today

36 Find the Upside

37 Reputation damage does not discriminate

Declare amnesty for those who tell you what went wrong **43**

Expect coverage on raw news, rumors and innuendo **38**

39 Hire right

40 Don't wait for a crisis to learn humility

41 Every crisis has its own rhythm

48 Safeguarding reputation is inexhaustible

Sometimes it's not the crisis but how leadership responds to crisis that harms reputation **42**

Declare amnesty for those who tell you what went wrong **43**

Spend more time listening than talking **44**

45 Make your recovery values-based

46 No reputation is bulletproof

The right culture is the best protection **47**

The CEO is the company's reputation guardian **49**



Enhance reputation by the company you keep
50

51 Don't let the Internet's allure blind you

Google is a reputation management system, not a search engine
– Clive Thompson
52

53 There is no magic digital eraser

54 Don't shut out the blogosphere

Take the high ground when managing reputation online
55

56 Guard against complacency

57 Corporate web sites are digital ground zero for reputation-building

58 Reputation recovery comes with no completion date

59 "Hope is not a plan."
– CEO Dave Barger, JetBlue

Scarlet letters do not fade on the Internet
60

61 Pursue a course of purposeful reputation management

62 Risk-free communications are hard to come by

Break the rules when you have to
63

64 Personalize the recovery story

65 Be careful of early success – it can be your friend or foe

66 Hire a battle-tested communications officer if you have to

67 "If you lose dollars for the firm by bad decisions, I will be understanding. If you lose reputation for the firm, I will be ruthless."
– Warren Buffett

68 A half truth is a whole lie
– Proverb

69 Make signs of progress visible

Be alert. Look out for blind spots
70

Reaffirm people's belief in themselves
71

72 Recovery is the strategy of small steps

Inoculate your reputation by building a reservoir of goodwill
73

74 Review "near misses"

75 Credentialize yourself with the right scorecards

Change in perception takes time to catch up to reality
76

77 Restoring reputation is an epic voyage full of courageous daily actions, small victories and incremental deeds

78 Embrace your luck

79 You can't go from zero to hero in 12 months

80 Prepare for the "gotcha" media moment

Use all inline media assets — online + offline
81

82 Multiply all your bad news by 10 or even 100

83 Don't forget that we all live in glass houses — there are no secrets

84 Embrace your fans or Advocates. Engage your Badvocates

85

86 Good corporate citizens recover faster

87 Use social media to identify emerging distress signals

88 Instill and inspire a common purpose

Every person and company is indexed somewhere
89

90 Recognize the permanency of the campaign — crusade daily

Reputation recovery takes at least four years
91

92 Corporate responsibility is more than a bandage to be applied when injury occurs

Seize the shift — be aware of shifts in business and perceptions

93 Use the "R" word (recovery) judiciously

99 Expect surprises around every corner

Second chances are rarely a matter of luck
94

95 Your digital fingerprint is eternal

Reputation restoration is a marathon, not a sprint
96

97 Spin gold from clay — turn crisis into opportunity

Don't leave your reputation up to the roll of the dice
98



For more information on *Safekeeping Company Reputation: 99 Tips*, or any of Weber Shandwick's Corporate and Reputation services, please contact: reputationRx@webershandwick.com

WEBER SHANDWICK

Advocacy starts here.