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WHEN YOU ARE A TARGET: COPING WITH ACTIVIST INTRUSIONS AND THREATS[©]

James E. Lukaszewski, *ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA*
White Plains, New York, U.S.A.

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ABSTRACT

The aggressiveness of activism is intensifying. Threats of terrorism against the United States come from all parts of the world. Direct activist action against high-profile individuals and their families is becoming a routine tactical choice.

Targets for attack are key government officials, not-for-profit administrators, corporate chairmen and chief executive officers, those with whom they associate including members of boards of directors and family members, celebrities, and high-profile products or policies.

These threats are intensifying because current activist causes are frustrated by decreasing public and media interest. That means the tactics selected by activists today must create ever larger disruptions to gain the necessary leverage of fear and embarrassment that attracts media attention and potentially builds groups of activist followers.

Learning to successfully cope with activist intrusion threats involves:

1. Reducing or eliminating the news media component, which in turn reduces a target's attractiveness.
2. Outsmarting and outmaneuvering activists, thus denying them the psychological, ceremonial, ritualistic, and public attention successes they need to achieve their objectives.

The confrontational character of present day activism is designed to create a negative perception of the target, or management's postures and attitudes. To counter these perceptions, management must communicate much more aggressively during activist attack. One of the great lessons in activist counteraction communications is that if you talk about war, act like you're going to war, and then get ready for war, *there will be war*. Avoid getting sucked into war. Plan for peace. Peace is dull, uninteresting, but ironically it can force early, more positive resolution.

Remember:

- *Confrontation* can't be eliminated but it can be modified, controlled, mitigated and anticipated.
- *Negotiation* face-to-face by a handful of people you trust is the only way resolution will be ultimately achieved. Remember reporters, editors, politicians, and activists don't sign agreements or contracts. They observe, speculate, move from allegation to allegation, and hope that whatever happens is interesting and furthers their agenda.
- *Prepare, rehearse, anticipate, stay in touch, and avoid predictability.*

This monograph provides these and other insights into activist mindsets, strategies, and tactics by focusing on successfully coping with activist intrusion threats and reducing or eliminating the news media component, which in turn reduces a target's attractiveness. It also suggests ways to outsmart and outmaneuver activists, thus denying them the psychological, ceremonial, ritualistic, and public attention successes they need to achieve their objectives.



If this Abstract has been helpful and you wish to acquire the entire text, please visit www.Amazon.com.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James E. Lukaszewski (loo-ka-SHEV-skee) advises, coaches, and counsels the men and women who run very large corporations and organizations. He is an expert in managing and counteracting tough, touchy, sensitive corporate communications issues. The fastest growing portion of his practice involves civil and criminal litigation. He is one of the few who can and truly does coach CEOs.

He is a prolific author (several books, hundreds of articles), lecturer (corporate, college and university), coach, and counselor. He is quoted in publications such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Miami Herald*, the *Harvard Business Review*, and industry trade journals. He is a columnist, advisor, or editor for almost every major public relations periodical. His 1992 book, *Influencing Public Attitudes: Strategies that Reduce the Media's Power*, remains a classic work in the field of direct communication. He is the author of the four-volume *Executive Action[®] Crisis Communication Management System* and has published 26 unabridged monographs on critical communication subjects since 1994. His newest book, *Why Should the Boss Listen to You?*, was published by Jossey-Bass in 2008.

He is an internationally recognized speaker on crisis management, ethics, media relations, public affairs, and reputation preservation and restoration. Visiting his Web site, www.e911.com, is like attending the University of Crisis Management.

An accredited member of the International Association of Business Communicators (ABC) and the Public Relations Society of America (APR), Mr. Lukaszewski is a member of the PRSA's College of Fellows (Fellow PRSA) and Board of Ethics & Professional Standards. He served as a crisis communications advisor to the International Disaster Advisory Committee, Agency for International Development, Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance from 1989 to 1992, and is a civilian advisor to several other federal agencies. He lectures annually at the U.S. Marine Corp's East Coast Commander's Media Training Symposium and was the second recipient of its Drew Middleton Award. He is the recipient of both Ball State University's 2004 National Public Relations Achievement Award and the 2004 Patrick Jackson Award for Distinguished Service to PRSA, and is among the winners of the 2005 *PR News* Lifetime Achievement Award. His name appeared in *Corporate Legal Times* as one of "28 Experts to Call When All Hell Breaks Loose," and in *PR Week* as one of 22 "crunch-time counselors who should be on the speed dial in a crisis."