


# The Lukaszewski Group

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Crisis Management, Leadership  
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## COMMUNICATING INTENTIONALLY

Sidebar to the Lukaszewski 40 Years in PR story

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### **A Trust building Platform from Which All Behaviors, Intentions, Strategies and Decisions Flow.**

Over the years, I've developed, teach, coach and advocate a very powerful and helpful communication philosophy. At the same time, this approach defines my ethical approach to life, to work and to trouble. I call these "intentions" because this is how I seek to operate my life every day, and to teach others to do the same. These behaviors build trust.

1. ***Candor – Truth with an attitude, delivered now (the foundation blocks of trust).***
  - Disclose, announce early.
  - Explain reasoning and reasons.
  - Discuss options, alternatives considered.
  - Provide unsolicited helpful information.
2. ***Openness, accessibility – Be available for the disasters as well as the ribbon cuttings.***
  - Be available.
  - Be willing to respond.
3. ***Truthfulness – Truth is 15% facts and data, 85% emotion and point-of-reference.***
  - Point of reference matters more than facts.
  - Factual overload victimizes people and makes them feel stupid, therefore angrier.
  - Unconditional honesty, from the start.
  - Get good at handling emotional situations, subjects and people
4. ***Empathy – Action always speaks louder than words.***
  - Action illustrates concern, sensitivity, and compassion.
  - Act as though it was happening to you or someone you care about.
  - It is literally impossible to put yourself in someone else's shoes in any meaningful way, from the victim's perspective.
5. ***Responsiveness – Answering questions relentlessly in every situation validates your integrity.***
  - Every concern or question, regardless of the source, is legitimate and must be addressed.
  - Answer every question; avoid judging the questioner.

- Avoid taking any question personally.
  - Build followers and be nice, even in the face of anger or aggressive negativity. Anger and arrogance create plaintiffs.
6. ***Transparency – No secrets (because important things and stupid stuff always come out.)***
- Our behavior, our attitude, our plans, even our strategic discussions are unchallengeable, positive, and explainable.
  - Our families would be comfortable reading about our actions, decisions, and discussions on the front page of tomorrow’s newspaper.
7. ***Engagement – Face-to-face is the communications approach desired by just about everyone and every victim.***
- Take aggressive positive interaction with those who challenge us.
  - Our base and those who give us permission to operate expect us to deal with unconvinced and victims.
  - Prompt direct interactive response, even negotiation, empowers the initiator.
8. ***Destiny Management – It’s your destiny, which only you can manage in your own best interest.***
- Manage your own destiny, or you’ll find someone waiting on the sidelines to do it for you.
  - Relentlessly correct and clarify the record.
  - Prompt, positive, constructive elaboration of the facts preempts critics and empowers employees, supporters and those who give us permission to operate.
9. ***Apology – The atomic energy of empathy. Apologies stop just about everything, including litigation.***
- Acknowledge personal responsibility for having injured, insulted, failed, or wronged another.
  - Explain what happened and the known reasons for the circumstance.
  - Talk about what you and your organization have learned that will help prevent it from ever happening again.
  - Humbly ask for forgiveness in exchange for more appropriate future behavior and to make amends.
  - Make restitution

You can call this anything you like: communications policy, guidelines or manifesto. I like the word intentions because it signifies that we are fully engaged in communicating in the most effective, honest, empathetic and open manner possible, all the time.

By publically professing these intentions you will set a standard to which you can be held accountable. This behavior can lead to an extraordinarily interesting, useful and trustworthy life and besides, you sleep better at night.