

## **THE ART OF WRITING IN A TIME OF CRISIS**

Writing during times of crisis is sometimes the most complex and challenging communication any PR consultant or corporate executive will have to do. To address this, the Crisis Communications Consultancy has launched a bespoke crisis communication course that can be tailored to meet a broad range of client needs.

"Crisis writing is a far cry from delivering on a monthly SLA," says Evan Bloom, MD of the Crisis Communications Consultancy. "It's not a case of sending off a simple press release and hoping for the best. Corporate messaging, tonality and emotion take on a whole new dimension and in light of this we have created and launched a specialised course that teaches any person who may have to write during a time of crisis exactly what they need to do."

The Crisis Communications Consultancy has teamed up with writer and editor Monique Verduyn who has 14 years' experience as a writer. "The aim is to show delegates how to create written material in response to crises in a manner that is practical and flexible," says Verduyn. "The course will examine real-world case studies of both good and bad examples of crisis management communication."

The first part of the course, to be presented by Bloom, will detail the two critical parts of a crisis management plan that determine the type of written communication required in anticipation of a crisis. First is the vulnerability audit which facilitates the identification of areas of weakness in a company or organisation that could be the start of a crisis. Second is a scenario planning exercise which will also give delegates an idea of potential scenarios.

Crises are by their very nature unexpected. The second part of the course will therefore focus on practical writing skills that people need in times of crisis. Examples of some of the writing that delegates will have to work on include: press releases, radio sound bites, letters, issued-based adverts, company memos and detailed e-mails.

"Dealing with a crisis can be very demanding because it prompts inquiries and concerns from a broad range of people, including employees, suppliers, trade unions, shareholders, customers and the public. Delegates will be provided with an overview of how to communicate in writing with all these audiences," says Verduyn. "In addition, the course will also look at how to write messaging for semi-literate and illiterate workers."

Monique Verduyn has an MA in literature and a diploma in public relations. In addition, she is currently studying towards a second MA, in creative writing, at the University of Witwatersrand. She has over 14 years' experience in research, writing and editing in the corporate, business-to-business, information technology and entertainment sectors.

### **Further media information:**

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