



# What Were They Thinking?: Crisis Communication: The Good, the Bad, and the Totally Clueless

*Steve Adubato*

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Some corporations spend millions of dollars on so-called "crisis communication plans." Others offer lip service, avoiding the subject like the plague. They simply hope for the best, praying that they never face a crisis. Either way, as Steve Adubato says, "Wishful thinking is no substitute for a strategic plan."

Nationally recognized communication coach and four-time Emmy Award-winning broadcaster Steve Adubato has been teaching, writing, and thinking about communication, leadership, and crisis communication for nearly two decades. In *What Were They Thinking?* Adubato examines twenty-two controversial and complex public relations and media mishaps, many of which were played out in public. Among cases and people discussed are:

- The Johnson & Johnson Tylenol scare: Perhaps the best crisis management ever
- Don Imus: Sometimes saying "sorry" is too little too late
- Former Attorney General Alberto Gonzales: Authority does not put you above questioning
- Bill O'Reilly: Know when to stop defending yourself and save face
- Former EPA Administrator Christie Whitman: Proof that your written words can come back to haunt you
- Hurricane Katrina: A natural disaster that led to a larger governmental disaster
- The Catholic Church's pedophilia scandal: Denial won't get rid of the skeletons in your closet

Arranged in short chapters detailing each case individually, the book provides a brief history of the topics and answers the questions: Who got it right? Who got it wrong? What can the rest of us learn from them?

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