# Failure in Public Relations: Non-profit Organizations Facing Growing Challenges

Carsten Tesch

---

**Case Study**

When Harald Ehlert suggested at a press conference in 2010 that his car, a Maserati, could be used to tour neighborhoods where social welfare recipients reside in order to gain insights into how they live, the days of Treberhilfe Berlin, his non-profit, were numbered. At that time, the organization was actually in good shape financially, being the most significant provider of assistance to the homeless in Germany's capital. As Ehlert's case shows, non-profit organizations (NPOs) can go bankrupt both fiscally and morally. More to the point, insolvency can also be declared by the court of public opinion.

In the spring of 2010, Ehlert became known in the German media as "Maserati Harry." Berlin's minister of social affairs pressed charges against him on the grounds of fraud, since he was allegedly receiving an annual salary of €422,000 for running Treberhilfe Berlin, which provided shelter to 4000 homeless people. In addition, his non-profit had placed the black Italian sports car that resulted in his nickname at his disposal, along with a chauffeur to drive it. Moreover, he was living in an apartment in a villa owned by the non-profit, located on a lake outside of Berlin.

It would take 4 or 5 years to settle the case. In 2014, he was sentenced to a year's probation for tax evasion, since he had used the Maserati and a BMW belonging to the non-profit for private purposes, without informing the tax authorities. In a second case, he was fined in 2015 for failing to file for insolvency in a timely manner. The court did not find him guilty of fraud.

The public, however, moves much faster than the wheels of justice. Its judgment is issued within days. Overweight and often described as resembling a pimp, Maserati Harry perfectly embodied the prejudices people in Germany and

---

C. Tesch (✉)
Berlin, Germany

141

elsewhere often have against social welfare organizations. Here, apparently, was a case of someone taking public funds meant to help the poorest of the poor and using them to live in the lap of luxury. And now he had to pay. The municipal agencies who funded Berlin's homeless shelters promptly terminated their contracts with his non-profit. Other high-profile NPOs cancelled their memberships. Key staff members took jobs elsewhere. Ehlert officially resigned as CEO, but remained at the non-profit as a director without title. During the insolvency case it was later revealed that the media scandal had left Treberhilfe Berlin—which had generated €15 million in revenue the year before it folded—practically unable to pay its bills. Moral bankruptcy took place within days; its financial counterpart followed a short time later.

## Legitimacy

Evandro Oliviera and Markus Wiesenberg, researchers based in Leipzig who specialize in communication activities at NPOs, speak of the "legitimacy" that organizations can acquire, defend and lose. They do not use the term in the sense of trust, capital or taking a leap of faith, but in a more pointed sense of being granted permission. Legitimacy is therefore a license to become active in a certain market or area of social work. *"Legitimacy accorded by an organization's external stakeholders can be seen as a 'license to operate'"* (Oliveira & Wiesenberg, 2016, p. 105). The case of Treberhilfe Berlin clearly illustrates which stakeholders grant these licenses to independent non-profits in Germany. The judgment that it was no longer appropriate to do business with this particular provider was issued at the political level. The relevant administrative authorities then implemented that political decision in practical terms. While that was happening, an opinion was forming in the media, where the information about Ehlert and his organization took on the contours of a scandal. As the cautionary tale of Treberhilfe Berlin shows, a scandal is when the boundary between reportage and opinion disappears. This boundary, one of journalism's fundamental principles, becomes blurred in light of "facts" that can only lead to one interpretation or judgment. When in scandal mode, the media morph into their own public in that they share its outrage. After a brief "trial" during which the public, press, politicians and government agencies all affirmed and reinforced each other's opinion, the external stakeholders issued their verdict on Treberhilfe Berlin. The organization's legitimacy had been completely depleted within days.

## The Special PR Risks NPOs Face

The above example shows that, when threatened with failure, NPOs and commercial organizations are confronted with different risks. For instance, many external stakeholders might now find their faith shaken in the willingness of Deutsche Bank and Volkswagen to adhere to the letter of the law, but that does not pose an existential risk for the two companies. Similarly, the Diocese of Limburg continues

to administer to parishioners even after its bishop, Franz-Peter Tebartz-van Elst, was moved to another post once information about his questionable decision-making ballooned into a scandal. After the public and media—in scandal mode and alarmed at the failure taking place in the non-profit to which the bishop belonged—came to the conclusion that he was personally responsible, the pope stepped in and relieved him of his duties. End of story. There was no question the diocese would continue to exist, despite the bishop's failure—perhaps because the Church enjoys a "legitimacy of last resort" that protects it from lethal threats emanating from the public sphere. A scandal of this magnitude could well have spelled the end for an NPO lacking such higher connections. The magnitude, however, is not necessarily measured in terms of financial damage, but by the attention and outrage the scandal *excites*.

In the case of a secular NPO, systemic questions would have been raised. To return to Harald Ehlert, there was no separation of the individual from the organization, as naturally happened with the bishop. The agencies providing the funding simply terminated their contracts with Treberhilfe Berlin. The whole affair then escalated into a political debate about the oversight of charitable organizations in general. Other NPOs and umbrella associations of the city—the German Red Cross, Diakonie, AWO, etc.—were brought together at a round table organized by the Berlin's minister of social affairs to discuss new rules for monitoring the social economy. The participants obediently showed up, keeping their opinion to themselves that the whole meeting was unnecessary and merely a political dog and pony show. There is much to suggest that the management problem which the round table intended to solve does not even exist. The so-called third sector is one of the most highly regulated in German society, since it is subject to all the bureaucratic requirements imposed on both the business community and the public sector.[1]

The story of Treberhilfe Berlin suggests yet another risk that NPOs must be aware of when they experience failure. Terms such as "non-profit" and "charitable" attract their share of suspicion. This can be ascribed to old-fashioned resentment, or the Enlightenment tradition by which "critical thinkers" inevitably take a closer look at society's "good guys." Yet no one is unfailingly good; the possibility of failure lurks as a matter of course. "Non-profit," "charitable" and even "social" are paradoxical terms, since those interested in doing good can never be totally selfless, as they too always benefit in some manner. The risk is thus inherent in the name. The labels that the "third sector" uses to differentiate itself from the business and government sectors are equivocal. They have an ethical connotation that draws the public's attention, particularly when it becomes known that an NPO has failed. And they have a bureaucratic connotation that is of great significance for social organizations in their daily activities. Being recognized legally and fiscally as non-commercial and non-governmental is the basis upon which this "third business model" rests, the prerequisite for its existence per se. Examples include the tax advantages accorded charitable organizations in Germany and what are known as 501(c) organizations in the United States.

---

[1]See also Elbe (2018).

## Crucial Conflicts

These two levels of meaning are at odds with each other, leading to conflicts between the NPO's values and its practices. Its members and staff, for example, can be left feeling that the organization is not meeting its own ethical standards. This criticism is often heard among social welfare organizations. Or the need can arise among managers to compare themselves with private-sector businesses. They feel that policy makers are not paying them the same amount of attention or appreciating them as much as major corporations and medium-sized enterprises. At the same time, social welfare organizations are major employers in many regions, generating millions in revenues. Not infrequently, senior managers at NPOs come to the conclusion that they are deserving of salaries at least roughly commensurate with those earned by their counterparts in the business community—an idea that is viewed much differently by the public. It's a situation that Germany's major umbrella associations for NPOs increasingly feel they must justify. The public's attitude towards compensation packages at charitable organizations is currently one of the most sensitive issues the associations face.

Harald Ehlert of Treberhilfe Berlin failed because of exactly this conflict. He tried to justify his salary and his lifestyle. He questioned the standards being used to judge him. He wanted to discuss the moral outrage, the feeling of injustice he had aroused. *"Does morality need to envelop itself in such ugliness?" Die Zeit* newspaper quotes him as asking in 2010. Why must the world judge him so small-mindedly when he was, in his own words, merely a combination of *"Scrooge, McDuck, Mother Teresa and a street-savvy cop"* (Sußebach, 2010)? From the viewpoint of the scandal, by advancing these arguments he merely seemed unscrupulous—then increasingly deranged, like someone who had lost touch with reality, since he no longer wanted to acknowledge the information that the press and public had deemed "the facts."

## How NPOs Can Respond to PR Crises

The question remains of whether Treberhilfe Berlin could have been saved in 2010 had it managed its communication activities differently. If third-sector organizations are confronted with unique risks, which are proliferating, then how can NPOs respond to those risks?

The approach taken in this chapter derives from the communication management used for numerous crises that have unfolded primarily among non-governmental social welfare organizations in Germany. It also incorporates ideas from academic research. However, few studies exist that examine the crisis communications employed by leading social welfare organizations and umbrella associations (unlike for NPOs in general) and how they are perceived by the public. Baseline data would thus be very beneficial, especially in light of the growing risks faced by non-profits.

Developed in the context of social welfare organizations in Germany, the method presented here is based on a diverse range of experience dealing with crises related to social work. Fraud is a common topic when non-profits fail. Others include

insolvency (of both NPOs and businesses); sexual abuse by staff responsible for minors and people with special needs; violence perpetrated by professional caregivers; poor quality of care; wage disputes; conflicts resulting from planned legislation; conflicts relating to refugee-aid efforts; disputes with parents at preschools and special-needs schools; whistle-blowing and leaked information about inappropriate activity and substandard services; conflicts resulting from a change of provider or from acquisitions, for example by a hospital; environmental incidents; and problems with food quality and contagion. As diverse as these instances were and regardless of whether they took place in major cities with numerous media outlets or in rural areas with only one local paper, recurring patterns can be seen in the risks that resulted for the organizations involved.

## Risks: Discrepancies and Trust

Crises (failure) at NPOs inherently entail two risks, which can also be seen as potential stages of escalation:

- Discrepancy risks
- Trust risks

Discrepancy risks tarnish an organization's image and damage its reputation among the public. Trust risks can call its entire existence into question. The difference between the two stems from how crises are handled in the public sphere. Are they "only" discussed in the media, or do they have consequences for how those stakeholders react whose trust is crucial for the organization's existence? The key issue is whether groups relevant for the NPO act according to what they hear and see in the news—for example, when funders cancel existing agreements, when government agencies freeze grants and other assistance, or when members and other supporters protest, resign from the organization or stop donating.

## Discrepancy Risks

Many providers of social services in Germany are also engaged in sociopolitical causes. They shape public opinion by issuing calls for action, contributing expertise and launching initiatives and information campaigns. In this role as advocates, they represent the interests of children, women, the elderly, people with special needs, and migrants, among others. They criticize social conditions and motivate people to achieve certain policy goals and social change; not infrequently they exhort, warn and condemn. In doing so, they often use "scandal-inducing" language, for example to decry child poverty, domestic violence or xenophobia. Their message is often aimed at "society" or "policy makers" as monolithic entities. Like policy makers and the public, they also often frame the message in a way that implies responsibility or guilt (see below).

At the same time, a dilemma often results when Germany's social welfare organizations become politically active. In their role as advocates, they find themselves "biting the hand that feeds them." That is because, according to the principle of subsidiarity, they have multiple functions in a state that can still be seen as a *welfare* state. They are largely responsible for realizing social legislation that is funded by government ministries, public-sector agencies, EU institutions, etc. In other words, within the context of the German social welfare system, *non-governmental* organizations are actually *near-governmental* organizations. This results in a wide range of conflicts and contradictions. For example, employees and volunteers often want to focus more on the organization's values and less on compromises required by current political realities.[2] Sociopolitical initiatives—such as those calling for a change in how elder-care services are defined or those trying to prevent current funding programs from being revised—are often seen as self-serving, since the organizations in question provide services on one level or another and thus seem to be fighting over money and turf (Tesch, 2012). Similarly, the organizations' social innovations cannot be implemented because the legal framework is lacking or because services and projects do not reflect the bureaucratic requirements imposed by funders (Nock, Krlev, & Mildenberger, 2013).

Policy decisions based on ethical arguments can exacerbate discrepancy risks. If it becomes known that an NPO's actions are at odds with the relevant norms, it will quickly find itself sitting in the proverbial glass house having thrown stones. This is true for umbrella associations and individual NPOs—as the fundraising scandal that rocked UNICEF's German organization in 2007 shows. At the time, the organization's chairwoman resigned, the German Central Institute for Social Issues revoked its endorsement, and donations dwindled. Germany's donation-funded organizations entered into a collective discussion about how their financial resources are deployed, the salaries they pay and wasteful practices in general (see Wirtschaftswoche, 2008; Wohlgemuth & Bentele, 2012). Yet the accusations against UNICEF did not hold up in court.

## Trust Risks

In the case of Germany's near-governmental NPOs, discrepancy risks turn into trust risks when political decision makers become "infected." This happens in particular when policy makers at the local or regional level are labeled as being part of the problem and held responsible for it to some degree, for example when a government agency is believed to have been negligent in its oversight duties or when unseemly connections between a service provider and politicians promote a scandal. As with Treberhilfe Berlin, policy makers can join in the outrage, claim the issue as their own and demonstrate their ability to take action by deciding what will be done or mandating that the relevant public authority decide. To give a current example, the

---

[2]See also Ramos and Wehner (2018).

AfD political party had a parliamentary commission convened in 2017 in the state of Mecklenburg–Western Pomerania in response to charges of fraud brought against two functionaries at a district-level social welfare organization in the town of Waren an der Müritz. The commission's mandate is to investigate "self-enrichment and nepotism" at social welfare organizations throughout the state.

During crises such as these, policy makers often react in predictable fashion, demanding more oversight and control. Yet their calls for action are less "contagious" than might be expected; usually they are designed to anticipate the outrage that occurs in such moments and cash in on it politically. Such demands largely remain without consequence in the short term. Depending on who issues them, however, they can damage an NPO's reputation and must therefore be classified as a discrepancy risk.

## Public Trust: License to Operate

In recent years, the Department of Communication Management and Public Relations at the University of Leipzig has developed a method for evaluating and visualizing the discrepancy and trust risks that NPOs face. The theory of public trust advanced by Bentele (1994) defines the interpersonal trust-based relationships an organization has with its stakeholders as a *"communicative mechanism for reducing complexity,"* with which the organization *"acts as the 'trust object.' Public trust is a media-mediated process [. . .] in which the 'trust subjects' have forward-looking expectations which are very much influenced by past experience"* (Bentele, 1994, p. 141, see Fig 1).

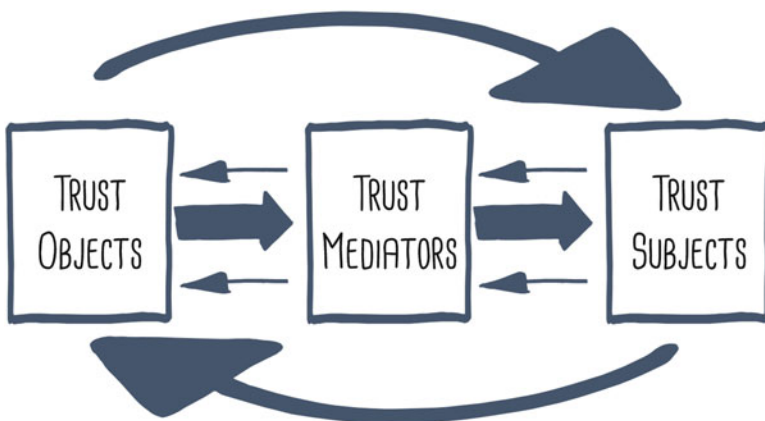According to this theory, Viertmann and Woelfer (2015) state five interrelated dimensions:



**Fig. 1**   Model of public trust (adapted from Bentele, 1994)

1. Basic Trust: ethical behavior of an NPO and its members, and the amount of perceived discrepancies concerning norms and ethical behaviour
2. Communicative Action: an NPO's engagement in transparency efforts and internal communication and in media relations and public affairs (external communication)
3. Expertise: an NPO's project work in the field, problem-solving skills and expert status
4. Personalities: trust-related perceptions or evaluations of members
5. Discrepancies: contradictions in communicative action (self-generated and externally generated).

Basic trust (above all, ethical-normative trust factors) is of existential importance for NPOs, as are discrepancies between norms and actions. *"By acting improperly, an NGO endangers its 'license to operate'"* (Wohlgemuth et al., 2013). Thus, the concept of "public trust" resembles the legitimacy theory of Oliviera and Wiesenberg. Both use the term "license," which seems all the more fitting for Germany's near-governmental NPOs, since oversight agencies and funders do in fact have the power to make decisions that could threaten their existence, for example by withholding certification or approval.

## Scandals and Frames: Forms of Failure

The scandals with the greatest risk for NPOs are media scandals. This does not refer to the father-in-law who "creates a scandal" at a wedding reception held at a religious organization's community center because he disapproves of the man his daughter has just married. Media scandals have a journalistic context. According to Burkhardt (2006), they are triggered by a *"specific journalistic narrative interacting with information media and entertainment media."* Even if the father-in-law were to make it into the local paper, it would not be a scandal, but an anecdote. What is meant here is a violation of social norms that resonates within society at large, outraging the public and media.

Yet scandals per se are neither good nor bad. For example, both Burkhardt and Pörksen note that they help update social norms: *"Here the general public is testing that great moral conversation, declaring which values are valid or should be. In the scandal's din, individuals and even entire nations reveal their understanding of what is acceptable, and reaffirm their values: the more uniform the outrage, the more stable and accepted the value system that has been violated"* (Pörksen, 2010).

Other authors are less optimistic and criticize the fictional aspects of scandals: *"During the scandal, however, the truth is submerged by a wave of representations that are either crassly exaggerated or wholly false"* (Kepplinger, 2005).

The challenge for NPOs confronted with failure is that scandals generate powerful realities by creating certainty where ambiguity is equally possible. In addition, they create mono-causal contexts and, above all, convincing correlations between facts and responsibility (frames). Thus, there are no scandals without guilt and no

guilt without the guilty (protagonists). Scandals become powerful through the emotions they evoke. Emotions become inflamed by information about actions and individuals that violate ethical principles. Yet because ethical principles in a pluralistic society are wide-ranging and complex, what is violated is more an ethical sensibility. The media and the public each create this sensibility in its updated form the moment the scandal takes place. That means scandals always occur in a given moment; they are not timeless.

## Framing

In order to influence and manage communication as a scandal unfolds, it makes sense to understand how these "journalistic narrative templates" work in practice. In the academic discussion of scandals and crisis PR, framing is often cited in this context as a "theory of media effects" (Scheufele, 1999). Framing theory has been applied in communication and media research since the 1990s (see Entman, 1993). It plays a particularly dominant role in research focusing on journalism and public relations. According to Dahinden, frames have "two key functions": the *"selection of perceived aspects of reality and [. . .] the structuring of communication texts about this reality"* (Dahinden, 2006). Entman more pointedly describes this form of processing information: *"To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient"* (Entman, 1993). Together these sources give frames four linguistic functions: They formulate a problem in conveniently abbreviated form ("problem definition"); they explain it ("causal attribution"); they assign guilt ("judgment [. . .] that can rest on moral and other values"); and they contain a "recommended strategy" (Dahinden, 2006; Matthes, 2009). Thus, they create a semantic pact in which observation, explanation and judgment reinforce each other and make each other plausible. This plausibility in turn ensures that the frames themselves seem to be self-evident—so much so, they are perceived as facts. The traditional boundary in journalism which attempts to separate reporting and opinion becomes blurred.

What this definition lacks, however, is the aspect of reception. In order to have an effect, frames must be accepted, otherwise they cannot realize their potential impact; they remain an offer untaken and die away unheard. *"Communication is much more than just someone launching something into the world which is dependent on someone reacting to it"* (Nassehi, 2015). This is a crucial principle in crisis communications. It would be naïve to view the competition for attention and for inclusion on the public agenda as merely a competition of facts.

According to Wehling, agenda-setting is essentially frame-setting: Simply presenting facts and trusting that the truth will thereby become transparent creates an "ideological vacuum"; moreover, without frames, one's position can hardly win the day and is threatened with quickly being forgotten. Another point Wehling makes is even more incisive in this context, namely the templates used by the opposing side. When journalists ask for a statement during a crisis, their inquiries implicitly contain an invitation to share a particular frame with them. Those affected

by the crisis usually react by contradicting what is being implied. From the perspective of frame theory, the problem that ensues can be portrayed thus: *"Whoever [. . .] uses the frames of a political opponent merely propagates the opponent's view of the world [. . .]. After all, verbally repeating frames—regardless of whether they are negated or affirmed—reinforces them in our minds and increasingly transforms them into society's [. . .] common sense"* (Wehling, 2016). To put it concisely based on experience gained during past scandals: Deny the charges and you've lost your case.

## Short Skill Set for Public Relations in Times of Trouble

For private-sector businesses and especially for major brands, Möhrle provides a proven method containing detailed instructions for crisis management (Möhrle, 2004). As described above, NPOs face unique risks during crises since a loss of public trust or legitimacy are very real existential threats—even if there is much to suggest that the difference between the private and non-profit sectors is diminishing in this regard. For example, businesses are now formulating strategies for corporate citizenship and corporate responsibility that set ethical standards which increasingly resemble those of NPOs (see PwC's 19th Annual Global CEO Survey 2016). More and more, consumers are judging major brands based on ethical considerations. Outrage can create tempests fueled by digital media that are capable of inflicting short-term damage on a brand or even destroying it completely. Until now, however, there has been a difference between people's attitudes and their decisions to purchase a product or not. As stakeholders, consumers behave differently than politicians do. For example, they decide to continue purchasing from Amazon, even if they have a low opinion of Amazon's business ethics. We have our discrepancies, which remain private. Politicians, in contrast, are closely watched as they decide how to act and, as noted, they can quickly be drawn into crises affecting NPOs. Thus, political decision makers are the greatest risk that non-profits in Germany face.

For Möhrle and Stolzenberg, the public's loss of trust in the business community is a variation of crises which they describe as being "political-ideological" and which are *"caused by critical interest groups, conflicts with reference groups or political trends"* (Stolzenberg, 2004). For NPOs, however, only these types of crises exist, even if at first it is only about *"incidents, mishaps, accidents"* or *"product defects"* or *"economic crises"* or *"strikes"* (ibid.). The issue of ethical discrepancies remains the crucial question, since it is precisely the area the media likes to target. Within the medial system, the scandal is the product that sells best. At the same time, the upheaval the media is currently experiencing as it tries to find feasible business models is increasing demand for titillating products (see Schmidt-Deguelle, 2004). And scandals occur in precisely those moments when ethical norms are violated, when words and deeds do not match. In other words, the "good guys" must always meet the standard of being "good." Good, however, is forever a question of language, of attribution, interpretation and judgment. And even if it might seem counter-intuitive, good can never be formalized as fact. To that end, there is much

to suggest that NPOs should understand crises as phenomena that are created—namely, by language—and should thus respond to public crises with a pointedly constructivist approach.

Five steps of NPO communication in moments of failure

1. Worst frame scenario
2. De-framing/re-framing
3. Story
4. Protagonists
5. Timing

## Worst Frame Scenario

This step is about recognizing the potential significance of critical information. Which frames might the information activate? How pointed is the language? How could the information be phrased within the context of the scandal? Which risks (discrepancy/trust) would arise if the "worst frame" were to prevail in the media? If this worst frame were to be widely shared by the public and media? If it were—"contagiously"—to become part of the political agenda? If worst indeed came to worst, which consequences might the scandal have for the organization?

The frames having to do with failure and discrepancies typically used in reporting on NPOs, and German social welfare organizations in particular, are: opaque fraud-like activities, entrenched bureaucracy, corruption among social welfare organizations, wasted resources, a lack of oversight, and inadequate care provision. In addition, the question is regularly posed as to whether NPOs actually practice what they preach, i.e. the walk-the-talk frame.

## De-framing/Re-framing

What does the worst frame look like? How do selection and structuring take place? Which aspects of the relevant information are ignored in creating the frame? Can the ignored aspects be brought into play and can they call the worst frame into question (de-framing)? What would an alternative selection and structuring of the critical information look like (re-framing)? Ultimately, the issue is ambivalence: How can multi-causality be (re-)introduced when mono-causality looms and, with it, an unambiguous assignment of guilt?

## Story

As a narrative template, frames are an open form that lends itself to continuity and sequels. Scandals work well as a series. Conversely, crisis communication must focus on bringing things to an end—the point at which no additional (journalistic)

questions remain unanswered. The story shapes the information, de-framing/re-framing it into a closed form that offers completion and closure.

## Protagonists

Who personifies the story in order to de-frame or re-frame it? Personification is a key factor determining whether a story is continued. The social aspects of communication are often underestimated, especially during crises, which is why a story needs a "cast." It is not always obvious who its players (protagonists) are. The content—not the organization's hierarchy—determines who communicates the content.

## Timing

Scandals bring time to a standstill. Outrage arises from conditions in society and from characteristics exhibited by people. A scandal requires ignoring the fact that both society and people change constantly. Its tense is the present. Communicating in a crisis, on the other hand, means reintroducing the element of time, which structures the information in terms of past and future. Once again, the issue is ambivalence. The present loses its timeliness when considered between the past and future. Conditions and characteristics are structured over time and, according to the media's rules of perception, that robs an issue of its appeal now. Events overtake other events. People and conditions change within the temporal dimension. For scandals, time is lethal.

---

**Case Study**

No one needed to imagine what the worst frame scenario was in 2010 when Harald Ehlert was being investigated for fraud—it had already occurred. His organization's license to operate had been immediately called into question when the minister of social affairs decided to press charges. Given the wave of mono-causality that was rolling in his direction, his attempts to establish multi-causality were clearly futile. No one was willing to listen to him any longer. Everything he said, as creative as he was in expressing it, was bound to come across as justification. With him as protagonist, his organization became stuck in the worst frame scenario. There was no pope to pluck him from the mire and hide him in a monastery, no deus ex machina to separate the organization from the protagonist. In keeping with the method presented here, what was needed was someone else to take on the role of protagonist. The recasting should have happened in-house. A revolt by the organization against its founder would probably have sufficed to convincingly re-frame the situation. The only thing more effective would have been a street-level rebellion: If the homeless had shown solidarity with their most prominent benefactor, Maserati Harry would

perhaps not have failed, but would today be traveling the globe in business class as head of Treberhilfe International.

## References

Bentele, G. (1994). Öffentliches Vertrauen – normative und soziale Grundlagen für public relations. In W. Armbrecht & U. Zabel (Eds.), *Normative Aspekte der public relations* (pp. 131–158). Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.

Burkhardt, S. (2006). *Medienskandale. Zur moralischen Sprengkraft öffentlicher Diskurse*. Köln: Halem.

Dahinden, U. (2006). *Framing. Eine integrative Theorie der Massenkommunikation*. Konstanz: UVK.

Elbe, M. (2018). Failure in public institutions – Characteristics of organizational culture in the military. In S. Kunert (Ed.), *Strategies in failure management: Scientific insights, case studies and tools*. Heidelberg: Springer.

Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication, 43*(4), 415–432.

Kepplinger, H. M. (2005). *Die Mechanismen der Skandalisierung. Die Macht der Medien und die Möglichkeiten der Betroffenen*. München: Olzog.

Matthes, J. (2009). Identität und Vielfalt des Framingansatzes. In P. Schulz, U. Härtung, & S. Keller (Eds.), *Identität und Vielfalt der Kommunikationswissenschaft* (pp. 117–131). UVK: Konstanz.

Möhrle, H. (2004). Krisenintervention: Wenn Gefahr droht. In H. Möhrle (Ed.), *Krisen-PR. Krisen erkennen, meistern und vorbeugen. Ein Handbuch von Profis für Profis* (pp. 141–166). Frankfurt a.M.: Frankfurter Allgemeine Buch.

Nassehi, A. (2015). *Die letzte Stunde der Wahrheit*. Hamburg: Muemann.

Nock, L., Krlev, G., & Mildenberger, G. (2013). *Soziale Innovationen in den Spitzenverbänden der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege – Strukturen, Prozesse und Zukunftsperspektiven*. Berlin: Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Wohlfahrtspflege. Retrieved June 10, 2017, from http://www.bagfw.de/uploads/media/2013_12_17_Soziale_Innovationen_Spitzenverbaenden_FWp.pdf

Oliveira, E., & Wiesenberg, M. (2016). Von innen heraus: Vier Dynamiken der Legitimation von NGOs und Kirchen. In S. Huck-Sandhu (Ed.), *Interne Kommunikation im Wandel. Theoretische Konzepte und empirische Befunde* (pp. 105–122). Wiesbaden: Springer VS.

Pörksen, B. (2010). *Skandal!* Retrieved June 10, 2017, from https://chrismon.evangelisch.de/artikel/2010/bernhard-poerksen-skandal-4318

PwC. (2016). *PwC's 19th Annual Global CEO Survey, 'Redefining business success in a changing world'*. Retrieved June 10, 2017, from www.pwc.com/ceosurvey

Ramos, R., & Wehner, T. (2018). Failure in volunteer work – A call for strategic volunteer management. In S. Kunert (Ed.), *Strategies in failure management: Scientific insights, case studies and tools*. Heidelberg: Springer.

Scheufele, D. (1999). Framing as a theory of media effects. *Journal of Communication*. Retrieved June 10, 2017, from http://www.phil-fak.uni-duesseldorf.de/fileadmin/Redaktion/Institute/Sozialwissenschaften/Kommunikations_und_Medienwissenschaft/Vowe/Forschergruppe/Scheufele_Framing_theory_media_effects.pdf

Schmidt-Deguelle, K.-P. (2004). Medienkrise und Krisenmedien. In H. Möhrle (Ed.), *Krisen-PR. Krisen erkennen, meistern und vorbeugen. Ein Handbuch von Profis für Profis* (pp. 41–45). Frankfurt a.M.: Frankfurter Allgemeine Buch.

Schumacher, H., & Salz, J. (2008). *Spenden eintreiben ist längst ein Geschäft für Profis*. Wirtschaftswoche. Retrieved June 10, 2017, from http://www.wiwo.de/unternehmen/unicef-affaere-spenden-eintreiben-ist-laengst-ein-geschaeft-fuer-profis/5351936.html

Stolzenberg, K. (2004). *Krisenkommunikation im Internet*. Magister Arbeit, Westfälische Wilhelms Universität, Münster.

Sußebach, H. (2010). *Der König der unteren Zehntausend*. DIE ZEIT. Retrieved June 10, 2017, from http://www.zeit.de/2010/27/DOS-Berliner-Treberhilfe/komplettansicht

Tesch, C. (2012). Verändern statt verhindern. *Sozialwirtschaft – Zeitschrift für Führungskräfte in sozialen Unternehmungen, 22*(1), 23–24.

Viertmann, C., & Woelfer, J. (2015). *NPO trust map – Measuring trust in the third sector*. Paper presented at BledCom Symposium 2015, Bled, Slovenia.

Wehling, E. (2016). *Politisches Framing. Wie eine Nation sich ihr Denken einredet – und daraus Politik macht*. Köln: Halem.

Wohlgemuth, C., & Bentele, G. (2012). Die Vertrauenskrise des deutschen Komitees für UNICEF – Eine Fallstudie zum Verlust öffentlichen Vertrauens im NGO-Bereich. In G. Bentele, M. Piwinger, & G. Schönborn (Eds.), *Kommunikationsmanagement. Strategien, Wissen, Lösungen, Nr. 6.33* (pp. 1–29). Neuwied: Luchterhand.

Wohlgemuth, C., Reimann, C., Bolder, E. C., Gebel, E., Grill, C., & Wölfer, J. (2013). NGO-Trust Index. Entwicklung eines Analysetools für das öffentliche Vertrauen von NGOs. In F. Bravo Roger, P. Henn, & D. Tuppack (Eds.), *Medien müssen draußen bleiben! Wo liegen die Grenzen politischer Transparenz? Beiträge zur 8. Fachtagung des DFPK* (pp. 117–137). Berlin: Frank & Timme.

## Online Resources

On the book website, additional content on failure is provided. Please visit: www.artop.de/en/failure