

**TRUPERCEPTION**  
**Crisis-Proof Talking Points: How Construction Leaders Can Communicate Change & Avoid Conflict**  
January 18, 2024

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1

Today's Communication Landscape **TRUPERCEPTION**



**BAD NEWS**  
CRISIS  
LOSS  
DANGER  
STRESS  
EMERGENCY  
SOS  
TERRIBLE  
CONFLICT  
RAMIFICATION  
PROBLEM  
TROUBLE  
FAIL  
END  
PANIC  
DROP  
CRASH  
DISTRESS

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2


**Leaders Fail at Crisis Response Because:** 

<b>1</b> They <b>let fear lead</b>	<b>2</b> By over- confessing	<b>3</b> Or under- confessing
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3



  
and the **terrible, horrible,  
no good, very bad**  
crisis communications strategy

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4

### What Happened—A Quick Recap:




- Two crashes involving the Boeing 737 Max killed 346 people in a period of five months.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> was Lion Air Flight 610 in Indonesia on October 29, 2018.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> was Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302 on March 10, 2019.
- After the March 10 crash, reports indicated faulty software causing the tip of the plane to nosedive may have been to blame.

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5

### Boeing's Initial Response:



“ The Boeing Company is deeply saddened by the loss of Lion Air Flight JT 610. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to the families and loved ones of those on board.

Boeing is providing technical assistance at the request and under the direction of government authorities investigating the accident. In accordance with international protocol, all inquiries about this accident investigation must be directed to the investigating authority in charge, the National Transportation Safety Committee of Indonesia.

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6

**Why It's Wrong:** **TRU**PERCEPTION

- This is a playing-it-safe, standard statement that rarely moves people to increased brand loyalty.
- It's overly formal and feels like a copy/paste from Boeing's crisis communications manual.
- It's true, you should stick to the facts, but when it comes to matters of the heart, tragedy and loss of life, less is not more.

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7

**Boeing's Second Response:** **TRU**PERCEPTION

“ Boeing is deeply saddened to learn of the passing of the passengers and crew on Ethiopian Airlines Flight 302, a 737 MAX 8 airplane. We extend our heartfelt sympathies to the families and loved ones of the passengers and crew on board and stand ready to support the Ethiopian Airlines team.

A Boeing technical team will be travelling to the crash site to provide technical assistance under the direction of the Ethiopia Accident Investigation Bureau and U.S. National Transportation Safety Board.

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8

**Why It's Wrong:** **TRU**PERCEPTION

- Clearly this statement was copy/pasted!
- No details of what's been done to ensure it won't happen again.
- The default is bare minimum facts, so we won't look guilty.
- Even if the facts prove you did nothing wrong, you need to offer them in the context of your audience's most pressing concerns.
- In Boeing's case that would be: Is it safe to fly?

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9

**How to Make it Better:** **TRU**PERCEPTION

- One way to check yourself is to imagine that someone you loved was on the flight. Would you be comforted by the statement or left feeling cold? If it's the latter, keep refining.
- "As a precaution measure, Boeing has temporarily grounded the 737 MAX 8."

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10

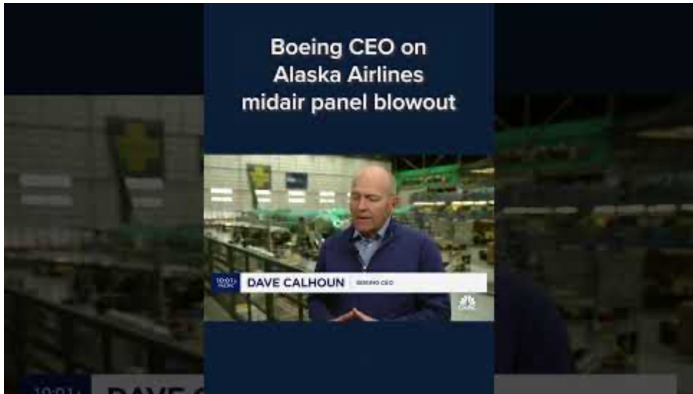
**What Happened Next:** **TRU**PERCEPTION

- Then CEO, Dennis Muilenburg, was eventually fired.
- Boeing plane makes an emergency landing after a door plug flew off mid-flight.
- Current CEO, Dave Calhoun, issues a statement.

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11

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Boeing CEO on  
Alaska Airlines  
midair panel blowout

DAVE CALHOUN | BOEING CEO


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12

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Power Phrases

# Block & Bridge



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13

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### Elements of a Power Phrase:

- 1 They **tell the truth**
- 2 They're **considerate**
- 3 They're **objective**

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**Navigating Political Conversations:** 


**“** I can't speak to all that. Here's what I can tell you...

How can we apply the same focus to [project]?

Let's come back to the election once we've agreed on next steps for the project.

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15


**Saying No Nicely:** 

**“** I want you to be successful, and I wish there was a way I could pull this together for you, but with the additional requirements I'll need to engage another resource. Let me know what your timeline looks like, and I'll see if I can accommodate you.

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16




**Holding Others Accountable:** 

“ I need your help to clear up a potential misunderstanding. Some steps were missed on the XYZ project last week.

What can you tell me about your recent contributions?

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17

**Elected Officials Not Following Protocol:** 

- Elected official regularly shows up for 5ks without registering.
- Pulls up to barriers and asks that police officers to move them.
- Says, “I’m an official. Let me in, or I’ll complain to the police chief.”
- Newer officers move the barriers; tenured officers do not.
- The police chief wants you to talk to the official. What do you say?

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18

**Elected Officials Not Following Protocol:** 


“ I need your help. Because you are such a devoted leader in the community, I’m hoping to clear up a potential misunderstanding.

On your 5K last weekend, some registration steps might have been missed.

Tell me more about how do you typically approach these events?

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19

**Elected Officials Not Following Protocol:** 

“ I understand <<OR>> I hear you <<OR>> That’s good to hear. Are you comfortable with me sharing with the police chief that this was a one-time exception?

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20


**Elected Officials Not Following Protocol:** 

“ I want you to be successful, and I wish there was a way for officers to help you [save time] while also adhering to protocol for other [runners].

Because the goal is to keep impressions high for elected officials like you and hired officials like police officers, I'm hoping you have ideas on how to reconcile your approach.

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21

**Gossip & Badmouthing Others:** 

- My preference is to share my opinions about [name] when they are present.
- I can't speak for them, but based on the information I have, here's what I can tell you...
- If that turns out to be the case, then we will take action.
- Thanks for sharing your insights with me. It's been my experience that...
- Let me reaffirm what I mentioned earlier...

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22

## Addressing Controversial Issues:



In a moment, you will all have a chance to share your thoughts about the proposed concept.

[John Smith] will capture any themes that emerge and post them, along with the details of the project, to [www.insertsite.com](http://www.insertsite.com) this week.

All future thoughts can be shared there as well.

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23

## Disagreements Over Approach:



On a scale of one to 10 how crucial would you say this opportunity is for you, right now?


What would success look like for you?

How on board are the people not on this call?

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24

24

**Disagreements Over Approach:** 


“ Have you given up on us working together?

All we need is a realistic next step, and you'll be on your way to [benefit].

If you've decided to go in another direction or need more time, please let me know so I can free up the resources I'm reserving for you.

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25

**Disagreements Over Approach:** 

“ I can't speak for <<Name>>. Here's what I can tell you...

I trust that everyone involved acted with good intentions.

If that turns out to be the case, then we'll talk more with <<Name>>.

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26

**A Positive Example:** **TRU**PERCEPTION

- In 2005, in the devastating wake of Hurricane Katrina, P&G created The Tide Loads of Hope mobile laundry program.
- Many companies make cash donations during a crisis.
- Tide, instead, extended their brand .

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27

**A Positive Example:** **TRU**PERCEPTION

“ Tide brings hope and not just soap into the world through sustainable practice, innovation, and disaster relief with Tide Loads of Hope. Tide believes in the power of clean, and for our friends going through times of crisis, clean clothes can make a difference. Ever since Hurricane Katrina, Tide’s Loads of Hope program has been providing clean clothing for families in the midst of chaos through its community outreach program. With a mobile laundromat, Tide is able to bring hope to devastated regions and has provided hundreds of families in need with washed, dried and folded laundry on each visit.

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28

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Let's Connect

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☎ (763)670-6701

The image is a business card for TRUPERCEPTION. It features a black and white portrait of a smiling woman with blonde hair on the left side. The right side has a dark blue background with the text 'Let's Connect' in white. Below this text is a QR code. At the bottom right, there are two lines of contact information: an email address 'melissa@truperception.com' and a phone number '(763)670-6701', each preceded by a small icon (an envelope and a telephone handset respectively). The TRUPERCEPTION logo is in the top right corner of the card.