

DEALING WITH AN ANGRY PUBLIC

Presented by the MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program and the



FALL 2010 | NOVEMBER 2 - 3 | BOSTON MARRIOTT CAMBRIDGE | TWO CAMBRIDGE CENTER | 50 BROADWAY | CAMBRIDGE, MA 02142

**A devastating accident. A toxic leak. Regulatory failure.
Massive product recall. Contaminated food.
A controversial facility.
AN OIL SPILL.**

Crises – that engender profound public anger – often come without notice. So you had better be ready. In the world of Twitter and YouTube, you must respond almost instantaneously and lead with confidence. The consequences of failure can result in irreparable damage to your personal reputation and the reputation of your organization.

You need to know how to communicate with an angry public.

Public and private sector executives continue to make the mistake of turning to a flawed public relations strategy: they retreat behind expert testimony and big name endorsements. They are pilloried in blogs and on talk shows and they lose in the court of public opinion.

There is another way. Learn how to negotiate directly with those who are upset with you; build understanding and working relationships; and enlist the support of would-be detractors. Convert potential disaster into opportunity. Enhance your organization's image.

The MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program & The Consensus Building Institute

At the MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program and at The Consensus Building Institute, we have developed a powerful and proven process for dealing effectively with people who are upset and angry – from consumers, abutters and environmentalists to investigatory committees, potential litigants and investors.

Our faculty has 'practiced' – in some of the most complex and intractable public disputes - what we 'preach' in this **Executive Education Program**.

Our strategy for Dealing with an Angry Public (spelled out in our book by the same name) is designed for use in both government and corporate arenas. This executive seminar will help you to confidently, quickly, and at minimal cost, regain credibility with groups who have been adversely affected, or who think they will be hurt, by what you have done or what you propose to do. It will help you deal with those who challenge you in a regulatory context.

You'll learn a practical framework for working with angry publics and for positively affecting public perception by better understanding the other side's interests, turning confrontation into problem-solving and creating options for mutual gain.

You'll learn how to apply the **mutual gains approach** to resolving important differences with angry publics, including:

People who are angry because you've let them down:

- You failed to live up to your promises
- The service you delivered was inadequate
- You said something that wasn't true

Advocacy groups who want to embarrass you:

- Citing unfair employment and hiring practices
- Charging you with corruption or incompetence
- Claiming malpractice or failure to act

Neighbors or abutters who are up in arms over:

- Proposed new facilities that they see as risky
- Perceived health or safety risks
- Changes to their town or neighborhood

Environmental groups threatening you over:

- The use and disposal of toxic materials
- Packaging, manufacture or recycling practices
- Land use changes

Those affected by an accident:

- Threat of catastrophe
- Demand restitution
- Threaten a boycott of company products or services

Program Overview

A unique, practical senior executive briefing and workshop:
Exercises, simulations and case studies

DAY 1

8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Registration & Continental Breakfast
9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Program
12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.	Program
5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.	Reception

#1 – Understanding the problem: What’s wrong with the conventional approach to dealing with an angry public?

The traditional approach to deflecting the concerns of an angry public may work in certain circumstances, but in many instances it will just make matters worse. Using staged media events, expert testimonials or so-called town meetings won’t solve fundamental problems.

In this segment, you will take part in a simulation highlighting the key elements of the “mutual gains approach” in a case involving the delayed marketing of a pharmaceutical product and the adverse effects caused by delay.

#2 – Key elements of the alternative approach to dealing with an angry public

There is an art to knowing how to avoid or minimize damage by turning confrontation into constructive negotiations. What are the criteria for deciding when, and when not, to use the mutual gains approach? Where does negotiation responsibility fit within your organization chart? Is it a line or a staff function? Is it the CEO’s job? Who should be involved?

You will learn strategies and techniques for:

- Identifying appropriate stakeholder groups and representatives
- Facilitating face-to-face meetings
- Inventing options for mutual gain
- Transforming informal agreements into implementable solutions
- Jointly agreeing to monitor results – on a regular basis
- Using professional mediators

#3 – Dealing with resistance to a calculated risky decision

Participants will apply the mutual gains approach in the context of a multi-party interactive role play: Dealing with Potential Risks of a New Commercial Product.

Participants must formulate a problem-solving strategy through multi-party, multi-issue negotiation facilitated by a neutral convener. Different from a crisis which arises as a result of a mistake or an accident, you're in a proactive situation because you've made a conscious decision to go ahead in the face of risks and strong public opposition.

The risks may involve potential environmental damage, threats to public health or a loss of community safety. But you believe there are legitimate reasons to proceed.

- What are your options?
- How do you decide with whom you should talk?
- How can you satisfy the concerns of the angry public?
- What do you do about individuals who are totally unrealistic or who seek to manipulate the situation for their own gain?
- How can you use a professional mediator?

#4 – Public apology

This is a one-hour section devoted to public apology. How do you decide when it is in your best interests to make a public apology? How do you do it? Who should do it?

DAY 2

8:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.	Continental Breakfast
8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Program
12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.	Luncheon
1:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Program
3:00 p.m.	Adjournment

#5 – Dealing with disagreements over values

How can you work things out with an angry public when you have fundamental disagreements about what is right and what is morally acceptable? How do you give weight to the values and ethical arguments of each side?

In small groups, your charge will be to reach a policy decision involving a dispute over a sensitive medical services issue. The case explores the most effective ways of talking about and dealing with value differences.

#6 – Media strategies consistent with mutual gains approach

In this era of 24/7 news coverage, how do you develop an effective media strategy? How do you work with the media to shape public acceptance of the mutual gains approach if you decide to use it? What techniques can you use to counter unfavorable media coverage? What are the best messaging strategies to avoid having your words taken out of context?

#7 - Applying media strategies in a highly contested public controversy

In this final exercise, you will serve as a media advisor to a number of high level public and private figures that have agreed to work together to respond to a media-driven banking and “red lining” crisis in a big city.

Who Should Attend

Public Sector

- Heads, members and key staff of Federal, State and County and local regulatory agencies
- Senior military, school superintendents and heads of public authorities
- Heads and key staff of NGO's, advocacy groups and foundations
- Legislators and key staff
- Judiciary staff

Private Sector

- Attorneys
- Chief Executive Officers
- Consumer Affairs and Environmental Affairs
- General Counsel
- Public Affairs
- Public Relations
- Regulatory Affairs
- Senior Vice Presidents
- Senior Vice Presidents of Agencies with practices in Public Relations, Public Affairs and Government Relations
- Vice Presidents of Corporate Communications

About Us

Lawrence E. Susskind is one of America's most experienced senior executive trainers. He has tailored training programs for companies such as CBS, Pfizer, Cyanamid, Guinness PLC, NYNEX, Credit Suisse, Manitoba Hydro, Biogen-Idec, CSX, State Street Bank, WPP and Nabisco.

For more than 30 years he has provided consensus building, dispute resolution, and conflict management assistance, training and advice to public and private clients throughout the world.

He is Ford Professor of Urban and Environmental planning at MIT, Head of the MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program and Founder and Senior Consultant of the Consensus Building Institute (CBI). Professor Susskind was the first Executive Director of the Program on Negotiation at Harvard Law

School and he is the author or more than a dozen books including *Breaking Robert's Rules*, *Breaking the Impasse*, *Environmental Diplomacy* and co-author of *Dealing with an Angry Public*.

Patrick T. Field is Managing Director of the Consensus Building Institute, Associate Director of the MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program, and a Senior Fellow at the University of Montana Public Policy Research Institute.

Mr. Field has helped thousands of stakeholders reach agreement on issues such as land use, development, and natural resource management across the United States and in Canada. Recognized as one of the nation's most effective group facilitators, he has advised governments (federal, state and local) as well as corporations, foundations, and Native American and First Nation groups.

Mr. Field is listed on the roster of conflict resolution professionals of the U.S. Institute of Environmental Conflict Resolution. He is co-author of *Dealing with an Angry Public* and has authored numerous articles and book chapters.

Michael Wheeler is the Class of 1952 Professor of Management at the Harvard Business School where he currently teaches "Negotiating Complex Deals and Disputes" and a variety of executive courses. He serves as faculty chair of the "Required Curriculum" of the MBA program. He has also taught "Leadership, Values and Decision Making."

Professor Wheeler is the author or co-author of nine books including *Business Fundamentals in Negotiation*, *On Teaching Negotiation*, and *What's Fair*. He is a member of a team investigating emotions and unconscious attitudes that people bring to the bargaining table.

Jeff Ansell is an Associate of the MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program. He counsels spokespeople, newsmakers and top executives on how best to communicate with media and other important audiences. Formerly a senior executive with a leading international public relations firm, his communications coaching techniques are employed by thousands of people worldwide.

Before that, Mr. Ansell was a TV and newspaper journalist, working as an investigative reporter, nightly news anchor, business correspondent and talk show host. Mr. Ansell, a past recipient of the Radio and Television News Directors award for the most significant contribution to the improvement of newsgathering in Canada, is the author of *When the Headline Is You: An Insider's Guide to Handling the Media* (Jossey-Bass). Jeff Ansell & Associates is based in Toronto, Canada.

The MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program & The Consensus Building Institute

Public disputes arise over the allocation of scarce resources, the setting of policy priorities, as well as government efforts to specify standards of various kinds (such as regulations regarding health, safety, and environmental protection). **The MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program** has been involved in testing, documenting, and assessing the advantages and disadvantages of using mediation and other forms of consensus building to resolve such disputes at the local, state, national, and international levels. In general, its findings suggest strongly that mediation, when used properly, produces fairer outcomes, more efficient results, and more stable political commitments, as well as wiser use of the best scientific and technical information available.

The **Consensus Building Institute** (CBI) in Cambridge, Massachusetts is a not-for-profit organization created by leading practitioners and theory builders in the fields of negotiation and dispute resolution. CBI works with leaders, advocates, experts, and communities to promote effective negotiations, build consensus, and resolve conflicts. CBI improves the way that leaders use negotiations to make organizational decisions, achieve agreements, and manage multi-party conflicts and planning efforts. CBI uses proven principles, processes and techniques that improve group decision-making on complex public and organizational issues.

CBI was founded by Lawrence Susskind who is Ford Professor of Urban and Environmental Planning at MIT. Patrick Field is the co-managing director. CBI staff provides training, facilitation, mediation, assessment and research services to clients on local, national, and international negotiations and collaborations. They engage diverse stakeholders and assist them to identify shared goals, manage conflicts, and build productive working relationships.

Testimonials

“Speakers were excellent and on task. They presented information in a colorful, interesting manner.” - Patricia Martin, Director, Government and Community Relations, Saint Joseph’s University

“This session was eye-opening. I’ve been doing media relations for 12 years. I learned a lot and will change accordingly.” - G. Douglas Johnson, Public Affairs Specialist, Bonneville Power Administration

“Great program. Very relevant to my current role, and I will be able to use the strategies right away.” Lisa Ross, Director, Corporate Communications, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals

“A fun-packed, knowledge-filled, two-day course that leaves you feeling energized and armed with strategies to resolve real-world crisis in your workplace.” - Linton Johnson, Chief Spokesperson, Bay Area Rapid Transit

“Excellent presentation of alternative strategies for finding and securing unseen value.” - Stephen Morisseau, Director, Strategic Media, ConocoPhillips

“An outstanding experience for novices and seasoned professionals, or anyone wishing to better understand the principles of effective communication.” - Randall Kremer, Director, Public Affairs, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institute

“Because common sense is profoundly uncommon, this program reminds us of how to get our clients back in touch with their desires to be honest and fair.” - Beth Masterson, Senior Vice President, Liberty Square Group

“A great program! I’m walking away with a principled approach to dealing with an angry public.” - Col. Boykin Jordan, Jr., Commander, 55th Communications Group, U.S. Air Force

“A refreshing approach to engaging divergent groups in developing effective solutions.” - Susan Massengle, Public Information Officer, North Carolina Division of Water Quality

“Breathe. Listen. Check your moral compass, and then respond honestly to questions; what great advice, and what needed advice this is.” - Patricia Villafranca, Special Agent and Media Representative, U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation

“Perhaps the finest 16 professional hours I’ve spent reflecting on how to do what we do better.” - Gail Lattrill, Airport Planner, New England Region, U.S. Federal Aviation Administration

“...More than thinking ‘outside the box.’ You learn to stand on top of the box.” - Brian Hague, Communications Director, County of Bergen, NJ

Registration Details

Registration Fee

The registration fee for the Dealing with an Angry Public program is **\$2,250** and includes breakfast, lunch, refreshments, welcome reception and all program materials. A discounted rate of **\$1,950** is available for non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations. If three or more people register from your organization, we will be happy to award a 20% tuition discount. Note: Registration fees do not include hotel accommodations.

Each participant will receive complimentary editions of Dealing with an Angry Public, co-authored by Lawrence E. Susskind and Patrick T. Field as well as When the Headline Is You: An Insider's Guide to Handling the Media, authored by Jeff Ansell.

Accommodations

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Boston Marriott Cambridge - adjacent to the MIT campus - for your convenience. Please contact Marriott reservations directly at 800.228.9290 or 617.494.6600. Note: To guarantee room availability and the special Dealing with an Angry Public Program group rate of \$249 per night, please make your reservations by no later than **Monday, October 11, 2010**.

Certificate of Participation

The MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program and the Consensus Building Institute will award a certificate of completion to every individual who completes the program.

Attendance Limitations

Space is limited and attendance will be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis.

How to Register

Please register on-line at www.dealingwithanangrypublicprogram.com or fill out the Registration Form below and mail it with your payment to the program registration office.

Program Registration Office

Dealing with an Angry Public Program
c/o The Castle Group
Charlestown Navy Yard
38 Third Avenue
Boston, MA 02129

Deborah Spencer
info@dealingwithanangrypublicprogram.com
617.337.9511

Registration Form

Salutation *(Mr./Ms./Dr.)*

First Name *(on badge)*

(on certificate)

Last Name

Title

Organization

Address

City

State

Zip/Postal Code

Country

Phone

Email

Fee Amount Enclosed

(Apply 20% discount if you have three or more registrants from your organization.)

Tax Exempt Certificate #

(If applicable, certificate # must be provided to receive non-profit registration fee.)

Payment

- Pay by Credit Card via Paypal (for on-line registrants only).
- Pay by Check. Payable in U.S. dollars to the **Consensus Building Institute**.
- I can't attend on the dates listed. Please notify me of future programs.

Note: An email confirming receipt of your registration will be sent to the email address provided on your registration form from info@dealingwithanangrypublicprogram.com.