

Is Martin Timell TV4's own Harvey Weinstein?

TEACHING NOTES

The authors prepared this case solely as a basis for class discussion and not as an endorsement, a source of primary data, or an illustration of effective or ineffective management. Although based on real events and despite occasional references to actual companies, this case is fictitious and any resemblance to actual persons or entities is coincidental.

Teaching Plan

The teaching plan has been created in order for case instructors to be able to apply and use this case during their own classes. Hence, this teaching plan will serve as a guide and as a helping tool for case instructors. The teaching plan aims to facilitate the understanding of how the case can be taught, solved by class discussions and the several learning objectives of the case.

Case Synopsis

Recently, the TV4 Group was going through a crisis that was directly linked to the widely bespoken and worldwide Me too movement. The Me too movement already started in 2007 but became a social phenomenon in 2017 when the famous producer Harvey Weinstein was accused by actresses in Hollywood for sexual harassments. The purpose of the Me too movement is to gather all survivors with different life backgrounds into one community with the aim to make conversations concerning violence become mainstream. As a result of actresses coming forward and talking about their own experiences with Harry Weinstein, women are finally being heard all over their world.

It did not take long before the Me-too movement reached Sweden, where Swedish celebrities spoke out about their own experiences of sexual harassments and assaults. One of these Swedish celebrities who told her story was Lulu Carter who was an employee at TV4 Group, the largest television channels in Sweden. Carter accused her fellow co-member Martin Timell in the programme *Äntligen Hemma* of sexual harassments through her social media account.

Due to the fact that Timell is one of Sweden's most beloved TV-personalities, this happening shocked the whole Swedish nation and put TV4 Group under pressure. Many questions were raised within the TV4 Group as well as externally, by the public.

As of now, the TV4 Group stands in front of one of their biggest crisis ever. In only six days, one of their TV-channels TV4 has gone from being a trustworthy TV-channel with a good reputation, associated as family-oriented and having a successful show, to becoming a company with their reputation at risk. It is now your turn to take the role of the executive team of the TV4 Group.

Learning Objectives

This case gives the opportunity to reflect, evaluate and achieve different key learning objectives. The learning objectives are not isolated only to this crisis within TV4 Group but can be applied in other situations as well. Firstly, companies who have a crisis that arose due to misbehaviour of a specific employee can learn from this case. Secondly, companies who are in a crisis that is linked to a social movement in the larger society can learn from this case. Roper and Fill (2012), emphasize the importance of an organization's ability to scan the environment so that shifts in public opinions can be detected in time before a potential crisis occur.

The learning objectives in this case will mostly focus on corporate brand reputation, corporate brand culture and social movements' effects on brands. In the following section, an overview of the literature will be presented that is connected to the TV4 Group and lastly, an overview of the key learnings of the case will be presented.

Corporate brand reputation

According to Roper & Fill (2012), a corporate reputation is a collection of an organization's past actions that shows the organization's ability to deliver outcomes to its multiple stakeholders. Reputation is an external perspective where the focus lies on stakeholders' perceptions of a brand (Roper & Fill, 2012).

According to Roper & Fill (2012), there are four different factors that corporate reputation can be judged upon, that all together consist of 10 criteria that influence corporate reputation. When it comes to the TV4 Group, it is clear that the two factors responsibility and credibility have been hit in the crisis. Responsibility has been affected since Timell decreased the employee satisfaction of others since he made his co-workers feel uncomfortable in their working environment. Furthermore, credibility has been hit since TV4 Group's comprehensive reputation is being questioned both internally by their employees and externally by the Swedish people.

According to Augustine (1996), managing a crisis is all about telling the truth and telling it fast. This is clearly not something that the TV4 Group has succeeded with. The problem lies within the fact that they should have told the truth a long time ago, when the information about Martin Timell was revealed for the executives of the TV4 Group for the first time.

Corporate culture

Corporate culture is a significant aspect in organizational life. The way people think, feel, act and value is based upon ideas and beliefs rooted in the shared culture (Alvesson, 2002). Culture informs about what values are important and dictates what behaviour is acceptable as well as proposes solutions when problems occur (Roper & Fill, 2012).

Corporate culture is significantly important since it does not only generate a strong brand, but it is also fundamental in shaping the corporate reputation. A weak corporate culture might lead to reputational problems (Roper & Fill, 2012), which has also been the case in regards to the TV4 Group. In the case of the TV4 Group, the crisis arose within the organization where one TV personality did not share the values of the TV4 group's corporate culture. Executives cannot ignore the fact that among thousands of employees, it might take only one person to put an entire corporation into crisis through one single mistake (Augustine, 1996). Worth highlighting is that behind the dominant corporate culture, there are subcultures which means that if a weak corporate culture survives, it usually depends on a number of subcultures within the organization (Roper & Fill, 2012). This further means that there might exist strong cultures within different departments but at the same time, there is also a lack of one unifying corporate culture. This in turn might be an obstacle in creating a strong corporate brand (Roper & Fill, 2012). The production of the TV show *Äntligen Hemma* can be seen as a department with its own culture where a certain behaviour has been accepted even though it was not in line with the dominating corporate culture. To specify, the people involved in production team of *Äntligen Hemma* such as the cameramen and sound technicians, witnessed the unacceptable behaviour but did not undertake any preventive action.

Another aspect of corporate culture is solidarity (Roper & Fill, 2012) which is defined as following; "Solidarity is a measure of the ability of the workforce to pursue shared objectives" (Roper & Fill, 2012, p.59). If a corporate culture execute solidarity, it might also generate trust among employees who observe that all are treated by the same standards (Roper & Fill, 2012). Looking on the TV4 group case, we believe that this dimension of corporate culture was relatively weak. It seems like all employees were not judged by the same standards which in turn provoked debate in media when Lulu Carter spoke out about the way she was treated by the top executives. She argued that her colleague Martin Timell was treated in a highly more favourable way than she was, once she revealed the facts of being sexual abused by him.

Focusing more specifically on sexual harassment at the workplace, there are various actions that organizations can undertake in order to prevent such incidents (Malhotra et.al, 2016). One of those ways is to have a strong corporate culture which is highly intolerant to sexual harassment. Moreover, by creating a culture that totally excludes sexual abuse along with top management's commitment and a well working policy, occurrence and escalation of such incidents can be prevented (Malhotra et.al, 2016).

Social movements

The social Me too movement was a huge contributing factor to why the crisis for the TV4 Group broke out and also why it got so much media attention. The definition of a social movement can be described as an organized collective which purpose is to solve some kind of social problem (McAdam et al. 1996). Sexual harassment at a workplace includes everything from standing too close to someone, to exposing oneself or hugging someone unwantedly (Snow, 2017). This is obviously something that the TV4 Group's work place has been affected by.

Recently, recommendations have been developed in order to guide a company in what it should implement to avoid sexual harassments at the workplace, and also what actions to undertake when such incidents actually take place. These are; recognize, respond and remedy (Snow, 2017). The TV4 Group failed when they chose not to react once recognizing the sexual harassments that were taking place on the set of *Äntligen Hemma*. A suitable response would have been to make sure that the employees felt comfortable with reporting the incident and know how to do this easily (Snow, 2017). Also, the response should be to investigate the situation and not trying to deny it. Regarding the TV4 Group, they did everything the opposite way. In 2008 when a former assistant came forwards with her experiences a couple of years ago, they choose to ignore the situation. Furthermore, once the first investigation was done in 2016, they still did not respond properly to the result, instead they kept on closing their eyes towards the situation. This has led to both an internal and external drop of trust in the TV4 Group. Lastly, the final recommendation is to choose a suitable remedy (Snow, 2017). In this case, when it somehow involves harassments on the workplace, the most important remedy is for the company to make sure that it will never happen again. It is important to prevent this from happening again. Therefore, the TV4 Group should make sure that sexual harassment incidents are easily recognized by both employees and managers. Hence, the TV4 Group should educate everyone on what sexual harassments stand for, state the company's culture and always repeat this (Snow, 2017). This is something that the TV4 Group is in the implementation phase of, but the question still remains if this is something that should have been considered years ago? The TV4 Group might would have benefited with stating a sincere apology, regarding whether they think they had done something wrong or not, in order to regain trust.

Overview of Key Learnings

Learning objective	Theory	Case
Recall	<p>A brand need to take social movements into consideration</p> <p>All within an organization needs to be aligned and be in line with the brand’s culture.</p>	<p>“Me too” (social movement) & Martin Timell (employee of TV4).</p>
Express	<p>Reputation needs to be the responsibility of all elements in the organization and supply chain. Hence, employees are critically important in promoting and furthering a company’s brand values.</p>	<p>How one single employee’s actions can affect an entire brand’s reputation</p>
Apply	<p>Managerial decision to keep or take away an important component of the brand’s personality in a crisis?</p>	<p>Crisis communication, employer branding, brand positioning, brand culture, reputation</p>
Evaluate	<p>Brand reputation in a crisis situation that is a part of a bigger movement in society.</p>	<p>Use of theory:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corporate reputation 2. Corporate culture 3. Actions to undertake when a company is in a social crisis.
Propose	<p>Suggestions on how a company can encounter a crisis that is associated with a social movement.</p>	<p>Honesty, strong culture and to not ignore social movements.</p>

Discussion Questions

In order for the audience to achieve the learning objectives of the case, a discussion in class is needed. In order to get a discussion going, questions have been prepared that touch upon important parts of the case. One main question is proposed in order for the conversation to get going, and after that, assisting questions are proposed in order to get a broader conversation;

Main Question:

Should TV4 Group continue to air the TV-show *Äntligen Hemma* or not?

Assisting Questions:

1. Who should take on the responsibility?
2. What decisions should be undertaken and how should they be prioritized?
3. Should one be held accountable today for an action that took place in the past?
4. To what extent does a crisis like this affect the whole TV4 Group?

Teaching Suggestions

The hope is that the teaching suggestions will guide the instructor through the case and provide different teaching tools that can be used to improve the case discussion. By using appropriate tools, the case instructor has a better chance to create a deeper discussion from the participants and keep the discussion alive. The teaching suggestions for this case are divided into three different parts;

Present the case

In order to present the case, the case instructors should use a PowerPoint. The PowerPoint is going to present visual material such as pictures related to the case and a timeline so that the different incidents become more graspable for the audience. Also, to provoke emotions and a sense of feeling for the described incidents in the TV4 Group case, quotes from the main actors in the case will be shown. Furthermore, the PowerPoint will be in dark colours.

Case discussion

During the case, it is important that the different participants have clear roles to play. Firstly, it is suggested that the case instructors take the role of a discussion facilitator with the main task to enhance the discussion in the group. Hence, the discussion facilitator should be active only in the sense of making sure that the discussions are kept on going by for example asking the assisting questions and making sure that all case solvers get to speak their mind. Furthermore, it is suggested that case solvers take the role of the TV4 Group's management group.

In order for the group to be able to solve the case, the usage of a white board is an appropriate tool. A recommendation for the instructor is to create a board plan on the whiteboard that are divided into three different sections:

1. Advantages of continue to air *Äntligen Hemma*
2. Disadvantages of continue to air *Äntligen Hemma*
3. Actions of TV4 Group

Firstly, the case instructors should ask the participants to state advantages of continuing to air *Äntligen Hemma*. We have given examples of different challenges that might come up in the discussion. Secondly, the case instructors should move on to the disadvantages of continuing to air *Äntligen Hemma*. From the advantages and disadvantages, the participants should come up with different actions to the issue. In the end of the case, given that there is still time enough, the case instructor could ask the case solvers about what are the appropriate actions to be undertaken by the TV4?

The Board Plan

Advantages of keep airing *Äntligen Hemma*;

- Long term success/heritage
- *Äntligen Hemma* has strong association to TV4
- To support all the employees working with the programme
- Show that changes can be made and use the programme as a platform for broadcasting the TV4 Group take on Me too
- Consistency
- Revenue
- Shows that you should not judge a person upon past action(s), everyone deserves a second chance

Disadvantages of keep airing *Äntligen Hemma*;

- Harms the reputation
- Taking it away might get people to forget faster
- Can signal that the TV4 Group do not take the situation seriously
- Drop of viewers/sponsors/collaborations
- A decrease of trustworthiness
- Ambiguous corporate culture
- Might harm the other brands within the TV4 Group

Actions;

- Stop airing
- Keep on airing
- Erase Timell from the programme and end all collaborations with him
- Start a similar programme to *Äntligen Hemma*, but without Timell

Examples of other actions that could be undertaken;

- Active communication
- Take responsibility
- Both public apology and internal apology
- Do an external investigation

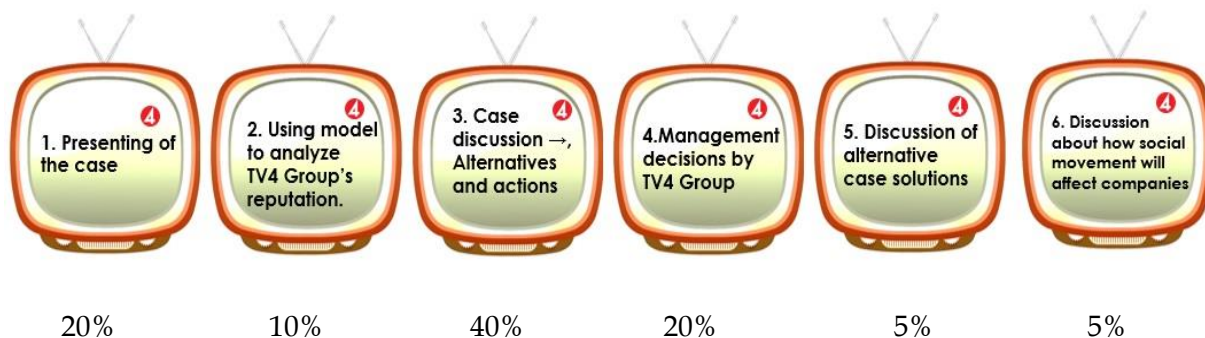
By using this structure, the participants are provided with a clear view over the case and their interjections will not be forgotten as the conversation moves along. Also, it provides a clear mind set of the situation, deliver a consideration of the different alternatives and stating what managerial actions that should be undertaken.

Final management actions

In the end, the case instructor should present the actions that the TV4 Group undertook.

Time Plan

The time plan below is recommended to use for this case in order to go through is as effective as possible. It is only a recommendation to make sure that all part will be covered, but the instructor should feel free to let some part take up longer time if that seems appropriate for the discussion instead of interruption to move on too quickly. Our time frame is based on a case time of 40 minutes. If the instructor chooses to have longer or shorter time plan he/she should still use the percentage basis on each part. If the instructor chooses to have a longer time plan it is recommended to put more emphasis on evaluating the situation through theoretical frameworks. The recommendation for a 40 minutes time plan is as follows:



Reflection

Throughout the course of BUSN35 *Corporate Brand Management and Reputation*, the learning process has been enriched with different live cases where managerial decisions in context of a e.g. crisis were discussed. Another part of the students' learning process in the course was to investigate, write and present a certain case, where the management decision was to be placed in the light of academic context. The assignment was about to be performed in groups of three students who, in turn, were supposed to choose a case as up to date as possible with serious managerial challenges.

During the supervision with our Professor *Mats Urde*, a discussion concerning three different alternative cases that were of particular interest, took place. Before we ended up agreeing upon an alternative, the professor asked us which of the three alternatives was the most seducing one. As a result we decided to choose the widely bespoken crisis that occurred in October 2017 in regards to TV4 Group's tv personality, Martin Timell. Together with the professor, we concluded that there is a general lack of cases which concerns the Me too movement. However, one aspect that was discussed was how the question that was about to be asked during the presentation, should be framed. One option was to ask the audience to discuss what specific managerial decisions should be undertaken. The second option, which was suggested by the professor was more direct and open "should TV4 continue to air the TV-show *Äntligen Hemma* or not?". After a longer elaboration about pros and cons both during the supervision and later on during the writing process, the second option was chosen.

The fundamental reason for the choice was firstly; The fact that this type of case has not been presented before and might be relevant. Secondly; This way of asking the audience opens up for a broader discussion and allows multiple ideas to arrive. It is although worth pointing out that the first reason, regarding that cases associated to Me too movement are rather new, puts the case instructor in a more uncertain situation since there is a lack of reference point. It makes it also challenging in assessing proper theory in order to explain the undertaken managerial decisions. In summary, it has been volatile process in weighing the advantages and disadvantages when deciding whether the second question is the best solution or not.

Another aspect that was crucial to consider was the fact that the corporate brand is Bonnier AB and not the TV4 Group. This was of importance due to the fact that our choices were guided by theory, that in turn, was directed towards a corporate brand. Although, after a consultation during class with assistant Axel Welinder, he encouraged us to treat TV4 Group as a corporate brand. Although, Bonnier AB has been considered in the case description due to the fact that they are the actual corporate brand. Anyhow, Bonnier AB was not highly involved in the crisis, thus, their presence as the main actor in the case, is evaluated as irrelevant

Since the case focuses on important, sensitive and ethical issues in the big world of corporations, the case should provide some degree of “drama” in order to trigger a fruitful discussion. Here, a crucial role lies within the utterances from both the main actor, Martin Timell as well as the top executives and the victim, Lulu Carter. By trying to integrate all perspectives, simply through a presentation of each actor’s utterance in regard to the crisis, it will hopefully provoke emotions in the audience that can potentially occur in a real life situation. In order to be certain that it works, the PowerPoint presentation illustrating those utterances, was presented as a testing method before the real presentation took place. The individuals who were exposed to our test approach, started to put forward reasonable arguments and created an immediate discussion. An additional insight was that the individuals also mentioned the visual attributes of the PowerPoint slides. They confirmed that first part of the presentation seemed to provide emotions in regard to the “dark side” of the crisis and is expressed through black color and photos in black and white. Based upon that, the second part of the presentation concerning how the TV4 Group encountered and solved the case, was designed to include more color to symbolize a move, from the “dark to the bright side”.

Additionally, to be able to provoke emotions in class, it is not enough to present the utterances black on white. They must convey a highly personal message, thus, a selection of proper photographs of the actors was also made. Each photograph of the actor was then combined with each actor’s utterance. Moreover, the case instructor role should not be ignored in the creation of emotions. Their role is also vitally important, not only through body language and the moderating process, but also in regard to dress code. A suggestion is thus, to wear all black outfits since it conveys an association to Me too.

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