

DEEPWATER HORIZON CASE CARD

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Basic Introduction

BP or formally known as British Petroleum is an International oil and gas company headquartered in London, United Kingdom. BP is one of the biggest international oil companies and they employ roughly 84,000 people based on 2012 reports. The oil and gas industry is a very dangerous field of work and there have been a number of safety and environmental incidents reported. The main incident, Deepwater Horizon, was such a terrible incident and affected many Americans living off the Gulf Of Mexico and the East Coast. Deepwater Horizon is an exploratory oil well located 41 miles off the coast of Louisiana. The **Public Relations Issue** is about the Deepwater Horizon oil spill that happened on April 10, 2010 that killed 11 people and led to a massive oil spill.

Background

The oil spill affected many people's lives and that is where the first **threat** that BP faced were fishermen and fishing companies being out of work because of the oil spill. The second **threat** were families suing BP for using a harmful chemical called Corexit that "helped" clean up the oil from the spill. Honestly, after watching the documentary in class and reading all the articles on this I think there was a major **lack of key messages** from BP because they continued to lie about using corexit and continued to ignore warnings and safety tests and were still drilling for oil.

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Communication

The first **strategy** BP used was to clean up the oil spill and get rid of “visible oil”. The awful **tactic** they used to clean up the oil spill was the dangerous chemical Corexit that basically formed a bubble around the oil and it would sink further into the ocean. Another **strategy** BP used was to have their own voice in the media and to calm the media down. The **tactic** they used for this was using Dr. Edward Laws to do a media tour and to explain how they are going to clean up the oil using Corexit. The **outcomes** to the oil spill were long lasting and are still to this day a problem. Animals, Sealife, and people were all affected by the BP deepwater Horizon oil spill and people still to this day have health risks due to the harmful chemical to “help clean” the oil spill.

Analysis

I think BP did a **bad job dealing with this issue** for multiple reasons. First, they continued to ignore warning signs, had multiple versions of dispersants but picked Corexit and still continue to choose to use the harmful chemical, they lied to the media about how well they cleaned the spill and so on. **They should have** been transparent with the media and used safer chemicals to clean.

Take-Away

The **Public Relations lesson** from this case study is not to ignore warnings and always do safety tests and to not lie to the public about how there is no visible oil left in the ocean from the spill.