



Did Katie Couric's Departure From NBC Affect Your Outreach Plan?



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After 15 years on the Today Show, Katie Couric has decided to leave the program and go work for a competitor. In planning for her replacement, Today Show producers and executives, as well as we from the general public, will wait to see if the Today Show can continue to lead the morning ratings WITHOUT such a key individual.

What affect will this have on your outreach? None, unless your outreach staff was motivated to get out and about every morning by Katie. Now they will have to wait until 7:00 p.m. EST to get motivated! (That might be an issue.)

However, the departure of Katie Couric does provide us with an example of why it is so important to build a "system" for success and not bank everything on an individual. One of the main ThinkThroughTools' ideals is to build a "system" that can be carried on by any individual with the right outreach personality traits.

How paralyzed do you feel when one or more of your main outreach staff members or flight crew members that do outreach leave the organization for another job? (Sometimes for the competition!) Everything they know: all of the people they know, the logistics of the outreach region, the idiosyncrasies of the territory and the history of events and deliverables are taken with them when they leave IF YOU HAVE NOT IMPLEMENTED AN OUTREACH SYSTEM.

Additionally, the new person who fills the outreach position has to begin from point zero in regards to learning the territory and understanding who the Decision Makers, Influencers and Dormants are within the territory IF YOU HAVE NOT IMPLEMENTED AN OUTREACH SYSTEM.

The NBC Today Show has built a package of success

in their program: Friday Morning Concerts, on-air weddings, etc., - a system to make the show successful. I am sure that many people like Katie Couric and watched the show to see her. However, the show itself was built around a successful system so that viewers will continue to watch no matter who hosts, as long as they meet certain criteria for the position.

The same should be done with your outreach plan.

- You should have a system - an outreach plan that is implemented, evaluated and amended regularly.
- You should have some type of electronic database for customer names and contact hours - the Outreach Module of EMSCharts (www.emscharts.com/pub/product_targetingmatrix.htm) is a good example.
- Administration should get regular updates from those doing outreach on progress, successes and difficult areas.
- You should always hire according to select personality traits so you can be assured that your "system" stays cohesive when a change is made in the outreach individual. ThinkThroughTools has assembled a list of traits for outreach personnel.

To sum it up, if you create a solid outreach "system" instead of banking on one or two individuals, your outreach should not suffer huge setbacks if you lose one of your key team members. Agree or disagree? Write to me at jchamberlin@statmedevac.com.

ABOUT THINKTHROUGHTOOLS

ThinkThroughTools is a professional services firm that provides performance-centric services for leading Air Medical Transport providers.

Our primary focus is designing, implementing, managing and improving Outreach and Marketing Systems & Software.

Our primary aim is to enable our clients to safely trigger, capture and grow flight requests. To learn how to safely trigger more flight requests, visit www.ThinkThroughTools.com.

EMS Week Recap

By Daniel Casciato
For ThinkThroughTIMES

In recent years, EMS Week has started to gain more attention from the media across the country. While it's great news that the emergency medical field is gaining the recognition it deserves, it also means more EMS and Air Medical Transport providers are competing for the same exposure during EMS Week.

Air Medical Transport providers must develop new outreach and marketing strategies to increase their exposure during EMS Week. STAT MedEvac (Pittsburgh, Pa.) planned a number of interesting activities during the week, including:

- Pittsburgh Steelers Hall of Famer, Franco Harris, and STAT MedEvac distributed free donuts to EMS providers during EMS Week at Heinz Field, home stadium of the Steelers.
- STAT organized a comedy tour with comedian Billy Elmer during the week. The locations were chosen to encompass as much of their service area as possible. Admission was free, but you had to pre-register on their site, www.statmedevac.com.
- Visitors to STAT's site were able to enter a drawing to win tickets to a Gretchen Wilson concert as well as VIP passes with a chance to meet her.
- A local country morning show helped STAT do a promotion at a suburban mall outside of Pittsburgh. The station recorded a contest of local call-in winners who drove an ambulance through an EVOC course. The winning score received Wilson concert tickets and STAT MedEvac items. The station played ads all week promoting EMS Week. Penn Care donated the ambulance for this event.
- On their site, visitors posted a "thank you note" to their local EMS agency. The notes remained public until the end of May. This was promoted by radio Public Service Announcements and commercials through the same country station.
- In one of their Rochester, NY coverage areas, STAT worked on an awareness promotion with a local radio station giving out prizes to callers. One of the radio personalities even received a helicopter ride with an EMS provider.
- STAT also partnered with radio stations in Elmira, NY, Binghamton, NY and Sayre, PA and gave out prizes to callers during the morning radio shows. Radio spots were done in other markets as well.

John Chamberlin, STAT MedEvac Manager of Business Relations and Development, said he was happy with this year's efforts.

"We think we had a successful EMS Week," he said. "We did something cool and unique, and we ended up getting some print, radio and television coverage that helped us raise the public's awareness of EMS Week. What was also nice is that we had partners in our events. [Page, Wolfberg and Wirth](#) and [Penn Care](#) and Smith Ambulance teamed up with us to make a great EMS Week."

In addition to innovative outreach and marketing ideas like the ones STAT had, a very important thing to keep in mind is that the success of EMS Week also has everything to do with your planning efforts. Keep the following information in mind for next year:

START EARLY

Begin planning early so you have enough time to cover all the bases. John said that they start planning six months ahead.

DETERMINE GOALS

Knowing what you want to accomplish with EMS Week is crucial to its success. Establishing goals will define the type of activities you want to present.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Every activity you plan should have a target audience. Having a target audience helps to focus your goals and improves your ability to create quality activities.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT LOCATION

Poor location leads to poor attendance. Have events in areas your audience is familiar with.

CREATE A BUDGET AND SECURE FUNDING

Your budget should be specific, including actual estimates for all costs. Until all funding is secure, do not produce promotional items or send out press releases. Identifying potential sponsors can address many of your financial challenges. STAT MedEvac received financial support from Penn Care and Page, Wolfberg and Wirth, LLC and their member hospitals.

PROMOTIONS

Start promoting your activities at least a month in advance. By this time, all of your programming should be finalized, allowing you to concentrate on marketing your activities.

Were you satisfied with your outreach and marketing efforts? Did you get the exposure you wanted? Let us know. We'd like to share your stories with our readers. Email us at newsletter@thinkthroughtools.com.

Why Getting Men to the Moon and Back Matters to Air Medical Transport



By Richard M. Obertots, MBA, NREMT-P (ret)
3T President/CEO

With 27 years in emergent/air medical/healthcare services, I have been able to experience many phases of how we have evolved. In recent times (being engaged primarily with air medical transport enterprise development), I have observed and experienced chasm-sized-gaps between our commitment to clinical/aviation/communication matters and those of customer service/business/enterprise → EXECUTION; the key word being our **COMMITMENT!**

I find myself obsessed with seeking wisdom and inspiration from history by reading about those who engineered systems to overcome incredible odds and prevail. Among the most vital sources are the creation and development of NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration) - *especially the very early days*. The individuals who were tasked with the mission to virtually create manned space flight had to innovate, create highly complex and effective operating systems, and cohere as teams in order to succeed - **and they did!**

In air medical transport - I am finding all too often - that bickering, trivia, lack of commitment to astonishing performance, fragmentation among staff and bases, as well as sheer lack of hyper-mission-focus over egos are undermining many programs. This directly affects safety/AMRM and patient/enterprise outcomes. To those who commit all, I commend you and honor you - for you, no doubt, adhere to similar standards as did the pioneers of NASA.

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For the cynics - yes, NASA has had its share of challenges - but no one can dispute the overwhelming odds they overcame in the beginning to form and execute manned space flight! To do this - I believe was, in large part, due to relentless commitment and adherence to their "Mission Statement" in FIGURE 1 - **FOUNDATIONS OF MISSION CONTROL**.

I have been fortunate to obtain a signed copy by former NASA Flight Director, Gene Kranz. It serves to

inspire me daily. I pray it will be a source of inspiration for you and your team! (SEE FIGURE 1 ON NEXT PAGE)

Please ask yourself, "Am I, and are we, operating 365/24/7 by a similar relentless commitment to such standards? If not - why not - and what am I going to do about it?" Heavy emphasis on the "I" - don't expect others to take the lead!

We are not operating in as complex a circumstance as space flight. However - we are operating with many individuals who count on us to get them through circumstances that powerfully affect their lives and loved ones. We **do** operate in a high-criticality environment which demands high commitment to systems performance. It's accurate to state that in how we operate, systematize, execute and improve our enterprises - **failure is not an option!**

I believe we all would agree that we need to place objectives over ego and aspire minute by minute to Gene Kranz' message as he signed on Foundations of Mission Control... AIM HIGH! God Speed to those of you who do - our community needs you.

Be Safety/AMRM and Systems-Performance Centric!

Rich O

Two of the most important sources of wisdom and inspiration for those who desire to advance air medical transport are:

FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION: MISSION CONTROL FROM MERCURY TO APOLLO 13 AND BEYOND

by Gene Kranz, Former Flight Director, NASA
ISBN 0-7432-0079-9

FLIGHT: MY LIFE IN MISSION CONTROL by Chris Kraft, the first Flight Director, NASA

ISBN 0-525-94571-7

If you'd like to have a high resolution .pdf copy of Foundations of Mission Control as a tool to help you and your team be more mission-focused and cohesive, e.mail rich.obertots@thinkthroughtools.com

FIGURE 1



Ann Hark!
 [Signature]

Foundations of Mission Control

- **To instill within ourselves these qualities essential for professional excellence:**
 - Discipline ...* Being able to follow as well as lead, knowing we must master ourselves before we can master our task.
 - Competence ...* There being no substitute for total preparation and complete dedication, for space will not tolerate the careless or indifferent.
 - Confidence ...* Believing in ourselves as well as others, knowing we must master fear and hesitation before we can succeed.
 - Responsibility ...* Realizing that it cannot be shifted to others, for it belongs to each of us; we must answer for what we do, or fail to do.
 - Toughness ...* Taking a stand when we must; to try again, and again, even if it means following a more difficult path.
 - Teamwork ...* Respecting and utilizing the ability of others, realizing that we work toward a common goal, for success depends on the efforts of all.
- **To always be aware that suddenly and unexpectedly we may find ourselves in a role where our performance has ultimate consequences.**
- **To recognize that the greatest error is not to have tried and failed, but that in trying, we did not give it our best effort.**

Upcoming ThinkThroughTools Presentation
 Sept. 25-27, 2006 AMTC, Phoenix , AZ

"High ASPIRATION - Horrendous EXECUTION: Why so many outreach and marketing initiatives fail and what to do about it" - Presented by Rich Obertots, ThinkThroughTools President/CEO

SHARE YOUR OUTREACH PAIN!

If you or your program has experienced a high aspiration - horrendous execution outreach & marketing initiative - let us know about it and it may be included in Rich's AMTC presentation. And you can qualify to win a SureFire A2 Aviator flight flashlight (\$185.00 value). Of course names will be changed to protect the innocent ;-). E.mail info@thinkthroughtools.com to learn how to submit details about your experience and ideas to help your peers execute outreach & marketing initiatives to achieve optimal outcomes.



#1 CAUSE OF FAILURE? POOR FLIGHT CREW CUSTOMER SERVICE!

Critical **CUSTOMER** Care™



For Critical Care Transport

Critical **CUSTOMER** Care™ flight crew customer service training

What defines "Flight Crew?"

Any and all individuals that participate in any way **in the process** of air medical / critical care transport! Communication Specialists, Mechanics, Administrators/Base Managers, Billing / Support Staff, Pilots, Paramedics, Respiratory Techs, Nurses and others - all have **critical** interactions with customers and all need to understand that poor and inconsistent customer service is the number one cause of failure.

Now you can do something about it!

Critical **CUSTOMER** Care™ is a 90-Minute intensive session that focuses on the most essential elements of effective and consistent customer service. It is **customized** for each mode of critical care transport.

After experiencing Critical **CUSTOMER** Care™ – participants will be able to;

- Define "Best of Breed" practices of a customer centric culture
- Comprehend how all aspects of operating must be customer centric
- Define the three critical categories of customers in critical care delivery
- Apply the four high affinity customer service principles of The DIRT ZONE™
- Put in action the TargetingMatrix® method
- Have a more clarified understanding of how customer service impacts the financial aspects of air medical / critical care transport programs
- Be more productive and effective on the job and in the community

Critical **CUSTOMER** Care™ has been designed by highly experienced critical care transport providers for critical care transport providers. This is **NOT** generic "off the shelf" business customer service training! The principles are time and metrics proven and originate from the nation's most successful air medical / critical care transport programs.

It's very simple; Success or failure hinges on customer service. As air medical / critical care transport competition will be more intense – the programs that are effective and consistent at Critical **CUSTOMER** Care™ will survive and prosper.

For more information on content, process, scheduling, fees and terms

Call 412.670.9906 or e.mail rich.obertots@ThinkThroughTools.com

