

Cruz Control: 3 PR Lessons from Ted's Blunders

After a rather rocky run for the White House, presidential hopeful Ted Cruz recently dropped his bid for the office. The end of his campaign was not terribly surprising. In a press conference on his first day back in Congress, Cruz said that he did not want to "[Monday morning quarterback](#)" his campaign.

But I do. Let's take a look at the legal marketing and public relations lessons we can learn from Cruz's cruise on the campaign trail.

1. **Connect with your audience.** This basic public relations principle applies whether you are running for office or not. As Republican Fox News commentator Charles Krauthammer noted, "[Cruz's appeal has never been personal.](#)" While there are exceptions to the rule (and Cruz is not one), politicians, lawyers and legal marketers are most successful when they know who their audience is and how to connect with them. Ignoring this basic step puts you on the path for failure.
2. **Know your body:** "Awkward" is the term that often came to mind when watching Cruz on camera. He provided many of us with chuckles as he was plagued by continuous blunders. His victory cheer with Carly Fiorina was [painfully awkward](#). Didn't they rehearse? Or was their chemistry so off that the simplest show of unity just didn't work? Cruz also [elbowed his wife](#) in the face on stage when he went to hug his father.

The message: Work on your body language. When you are in front of your audience, whether it be at a client meeting or a speaking engagement, choreograph your movements. You want to make sure that you are natural. If you are anxious about appearing in a public forum, be sure to practice, especially if an appearance involves another person.

1. **Avoid humiliating optics:** Some embarrassing moments can't be prevented. Others are a different story. For example, another of Cruz's blunders was a [nauseating](#) reminder to keep a tissue handy if you think you are going to need it. My grandmother used to keep a hanky in her sleeve. Maybe Cruz should, too.

In March, my colleague Michelle Samuels provided [PR takeaways learned from from Donald Trump's campaign](#). While Cruz employed different tactics in his failed run for the White House, both provide important PR messages for law firms: [Understanding your brand](#), knowing your message and knowing how to deliver it remain key components to success on the campaign trail and off of it.

To further discuss how to remain true to your brand and avoid blunders, contact me, Stephanie Holtzman, at sholtzman@jaffepr.com.



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