

Five Secrets for Responding to Negative Criticism

Provided by Einstein Medical*

1. Stay cool.

Think, “what would the Fonz do?” Then do that. It’s just not the end of the world. Nobody bats a thousand...people understand you can get bad reviews. You can improve. You can work on this. You can make it better. Don’t freak out. There’s not that much competition under your name. You can get good information out there under your name. Most reputation management issues start with a search for your name and you don’t like the result. Your whole practice is not going to crumble. You’re going to be able to take care of this.

2. Don’t get defensive and respond online.

Some people are just ragers; they’re just angry people. Don’t get sucked into communicating online with someone. It’s a dead end. You’re just giving the thing legs and fanning the flames for the search engines to pick up on a developing story. If a review that’s only three lines long is well cataloged, think how well a review with your 20 line long response will catalog. You’re just improving the search engine optimization of that thing by responding to it.

3. Get it offline ASAP.

Basically, don’t respond to anything online unless it’s positive. Take it offline as soon as you can; don’t let the conversation live in perpetuity on the web. Don’t even send an email. Call on the phone. Get a human-to-human interaction. Evaluate the problem and address it. If you screwed up you need to hit it head on. If the person is really crazy, you might need to let it go. The sooner you get them offline, the sooner you can diffuse it. Communication is the root of all reputation management issues. The sooner you can get it offline, the sooner you’re on your way to addressing it.

4. Have a plan.

The Air Force has a department that’s devoted to damage control. They want to have great information out there about the Air Force and they see negative information as a form of terrorism, just like you.

AIR FORCE BLOG ASSESSMENT

AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS AGENCY - EMERGING TECHNOLOGY DIVISION

ASSESSMENT

BLOG POSTING
Has someone discovered a blog post about your organization?
Is it a positive posting?

CONTACT INFORMATION

USAF Public Affairs Agency
901 North Stuart Street, Suite 605
Ballston, VA 22203
Tel: 703-696-1158
E-mail: David.Faggard@pentagon.af.mil
Blog: www.airforcelive.blogspot.com

EVALUATE

CONCURRENCE
A factual and well cited response, which may agree or disagree with the post, yet is not negative.
You can concur with the post, let stand or provide a positive review.
Do you want to respond?

"TROLLS"
Is this a site dedicated to bashing and degrading others?

MONITOR ONLY
Avoid responding to specific posts, monitor the site for relevant information and comments.

"RAGER"
Is the posting a rant, rage, joke, ridicule or satirical in nature?

FIX THE FACTS
Respond with factual information directly on comment board.
(See 5 Blog Response Considerations below).

"MISGUIDED"
Are there erroneous facts in the posting?

RESTORATION
Rectify the situation, respond and act upon a reasonable solution.
(See 5 Blog Response Considerations below).

"UNHAPPY CUSTOMER"
Is the posting a result of a negative experience from one of our Stakeholders?

LET POST STAND
Let the blog post stand -- no response.

RESPOND

SHARE SUCCESS
Proactively share your story and your mission with the blog.
(See 5 Blog Response Considerations below).

FINAL EVALUATION
Base response on present circumstances, site influence and stakeholders prominence.
Will you respond?

BLOG RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS

<p>TRANSPARENCY Disclose your Air Force connection.</p>	<p>SOURCING Cite your sources by including hyperlinks, video, images or other references.</p>	<p>TIMELINESS Take time to create good responses, from a few hours to a day.</p>	<p>STONE Respond in a tone that reflects highly on the rich history of the Air Force.</p>	<p>INFLUENCE Focus on the most influential blogs related to the Air Force.</p>
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Isn't it interesting that everyone is dealing with this issue? Look how the Air Force has planned to handle all types of comments: "Trolls and ragers" – Just monitor the situation. If they're misguided, fix the problem. If they're unhappy, look for reasonable resolution. If it's a positive online post, agree with it. You can want to give that legs by saying, "Hey, thanks! We appreciate that!" When you find something positive, stroke it. This is a great example of planning your strategy BEFORE you have a situation. It's a great idea.

5 Let it go.

There's very little you can do with a bad post, really. There's nothing that can be said or done short of calling that person up and getting it offline. Most any response is just going to allow the situation to get bigger and bigger. No one has perfect reviews. Don't feed into the hype; you're better off to just let it go. You're better off setting good systems in place to deal with unhappy patients before it gets this far down the path. People are First Amendment protected; if someone wants to do it, they can do it. You need to have good systems in place to deal with the truly unhappy patient and if you find a bad review, don't work on that. Let it go. Work on more positive info.

Interested in learning more?

Contact the experts at Einstein Medical.

Call 800.258.9221 or visit us at:

<http://www.einsteinmedical.com>