



**Public Relations: Communicate with substance and compassion - by Harry Zlokower**

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In this time of great stress and uncertainty, take care and be sensitive in what and how you communicate with everyone in your business space including tenants, owners, buyers, sellers, borrowers, investors, partners, and clients. What is essential is that—even if you are marketing services and reinforcing your brand in the process—you communicate your messaging with substance and sincerity with the end goal of helping and making a difference.

Landlords, lenders, and professional service providers in long term contractual relationships face the special challenge of managing leases, mortgages and fees as unemployment soars and income sources vanish for tenants, borrowers, and owners. While landlords and other providers understandably must do what you can to preserve your assets, it is equally as important that you communicate your intentions and concerns with understanding and compassion.

This can range from forgiving rent as Mario Salerno, owner of 18 Brooklyn apartment buildings announced he would do for April, or finding ways to accommodate those who are beholden and dependent on your products and services. What is essential is that you use all the means at your disposal from e-mailing, phone, interactive websites, virtual conferencing and webinars to earned or traditional media, digital and content marketing to bond with your tenants and clients, let them know you care and that you want to work with them.

For commercial brokers, the coronavirus pandemic may mean informing tenants and landlords how to agreeably renegotiate lease terms and to prepare workplaces for returning employees. Investors, deal-makers and their legal and accounting advisors are finding ways to move their transactions along with virtual tours, closings and other technological aids. Others like Billy Procida, CEO of Procida Funding & Advisors, offer free webinars on how valuations are impacted by the pandemic and the probable discounts on potential liquidations.

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