# Final Assignment

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1. Do you agree that good communication reduces uncertainty; in your opinion could it have saved Pan Am?

Ans. Yes, I think that good communication reduces uncertainty in a communication, People engage in passive, active, or interactive strategies to reduce uncertainty with others. Strategies as seeking information, focusing on primary goals, contingency planning, plan adaptation, accretive planning, and framing are often utilized by human communicators. According to Berger, If a person were to observe another in their natural environment, intentionally unnoticeable, to gain information on another, would be categorized as using a passive tactic for reducing uncertainties. For example, watching someone in class, cafeteria, or any common area without attracting attention. An active strategist would result to means of reducing uncertainties without any personal direct contact. For example, if one were to ask a friend about a particular person, or ask the particular person's friend for some information without actually confronting the person directly. An interactive strategist would directly confront the individual and engage in some form of dialog to reduce the uncertainties between the two. Studies have been conducted to determine the differences in the uses of uncertainty reduction strategies among various ethnicities. A study, conducted in the United States, suggests that significant differences are apparent. Self-disclosure has a pan-cultural effect on attributional confidence but other types of uncertainty reduction strategies appeared to be more culture-specific. “A multiple comparisons analysis using a least significance difference criterion indicated that for both self- and other-disclosure, African-Americans used greater self-disclosure than Euro-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, and Asian-Americans and perceived greater other interethnic disclosure. The only other significant differences found in the multiple comparisons test were between self- and other-disclosure levels for Hispanic-Americans and Asian-Americans, namely, the former perceived greater self- and other-disclosure levels than Asian-Americans.

In addition, the subjectivity of people's self-assessment renders the premise of uncertainty reduction problematic. The generation of uncertainty comes from people's lack of knowledge about themselves, information and environment. However, it is primarily people's self-perception about one's own cognitions and ability that cause uncertainty, and this self-perception itself is hard to measure. In Brashers' study on uncertainty management's application to health communication, he explains the uncertainty of self-perception that people's feeling of uncertain is not necessarily correspond to its self-assessment of available knowledge.

Yes in my opinion Pan Am would be saved if he, when uncertainty information is processed, interpretation differences between individual readers, misunderstandings and biases may occur (such as availability heuristic, confirmation bias, overconfidence effect/bias) - relative changes in risks can sound alarming, but can be seriously misleading if the baseline risk is not clear - risk experts artificially separate the probability and magnitude components of a risk, but non-scientific audiences don't, leading to an under-appreciation of low probability high impact events - framing influences the interpretation of uncertainties. When uncertainty information has been read and processed, the question remains whether and how this information is used (for example, in the policy process, public debate or to form a personal opinion), and whether it is used ‘correctly’. Uncertainty information that was processed may simply be forgotten after reading it.

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2. Based on the case study do you think Pan Am was flexible in their decision making?

Ans. Yes, I think that Some plaintiffs likely considered legal action against the United States Government for its failure to warn passengers of a bomb threat but found they were probably barred by the Federal Torts Claims Act (FTCA).9 In order to recover in a tort action, this statute requires the plaintiffs prove that the negligence occurred in the United States.2 For example, the FAA would have to be sued for its failure to require the airline to warn passengers or for its own failure to warn passengers of threats to security. The plaintiffs also would have to prove such failure to warn was not part of the FAA's "discretionary function.'' It seems unlikely a plaintiff would succeed against the government under the FTCA. The adoption or rejection of policies, rules, or regulations normally falls within the discretion of the FAA, and as such, the "discretionary function" exception to the FTCA would apply to bar recovery. Speculation that Pan Am Flight 103 was actually a drug run protected by the CIA and DEA in exchange for information on hostages held in Iran at the time implicates the United States Department of State in more serious malfeasance than mere negligence. Aside from the domestic liability issues, if the guilty party is ever identified, international political repercussions will likely follow. These repercussions could be complex, particularly if the bombing was inspired or given assistance by the governments of Iran, Syria, or Egypt.26 All receive support from the Soviet Union. If criminal indictments are handed down by the Scottish Lord Advocate and the United States commences extradition proceedings, international negotiators will be grappling with additional legal issues relating to the availability of the death penalty in the United States. 7 Also on an international level, the crash has prompted discussion and debate at the annual Montreal meeting of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) over the adequacy of both international airport security and the relief provided under the Warsaw Convention.

Although tragedies of this magnitude create their own impetus for change, another force has kept steady pressure on Pan Am, the United States Government, the FAA, the American public, and the international aviation community to prevent repetition of the events of Lockerbie. On February 19, 1989, families of those who died on Pan Am Flight 103 formed a support group, "Victims of Pan Am Flight 103." The group originally formed to secure the expeditious return of belongings, obtain answers to questions, and force a full, independent investigation of the crash.29 The group's efforts have blossomed into an investigation of all aspects of air security, both domestic and international. Labeled "strident" by even its own members,3 0 the group is both persistent and articulate in its criticism of aviation security practices. Members have been a forceful presence at government hearings on aviation security, and are skillful in obtaining media coverage. They have appeared on at least five television broadcasts relating to the Pan Am Flight 103 disaster. While the legislators initially focused on technological solutions to problems in aviation security, the "Victims of Pan Am Flight 103" maintained that additional measures were needed. The group continues to insist that unless government becomes actively responsible for passenger security, passengers deserve the right to be warned of credible bomb threats so that they may take steps to protect themselves. Until recently, this proposal has met with opposition. The group, however, is determined to get answers and results; some members have gone to great lengths to prove the inadequacy of air security 3 ' As time passes and the sense of urgency for legislative reform subsides, the role of the "Victims of Pan Am Flight 103" will become more important in ensuring change takes place. Fortunately, the "Victims of Pan Am Flight 103" have a sustained, personal commitment to improved aviation security.

3.In your opinion where do you think they made a mistake that caused the failure to the airline.

Ans. People are rarely willing to admit their mistakes. It is human nature to make mistakes. We all make them. It is also human nature to resist admitting that we made mistakes. None of us likes to do that. However, the best way to reduce mistakes is to admit they were made, investigate the reasons for them, and try to remedy whatever caused them. Some fields are particularly good this. The airline industry may be world champion at mistake reduction. You may despise the way they treat their customers (I do), but you have to admit that they are phenomenally successful at avoiding their most serious mistake - crashing airplanes. During World War II when planes were built and pilots were trained in haste, planes fell out of the sky like hail. More planes and pilots were lost to accidents - mistakes, in other words -- than to enemy combat. But after the war as commercial air travel blossomed, error reduction, that is safety, became the industry's #1 priority. In 1959 fatal crashes of airplanes produced in the United States and Europe occurred about once per 100,000 flights. That's a pretty low mistake rate for the spectacularly complex process of building, maintaining, and flying a complicated machine. However, it got much better. By 2016, the fatal accident rate was 100 times lower - one fatal accident per 10 million flights. And incredibly among domestic passenger flights, there have been zero accident fatalities in the United States since 2009! In other fields where complex tasks commonly require the coordinated efforts of teams, mistake reduction could also save lives, but despite serious efforts in that direction there has been considerably less progress. Take medicine for instance, a study in the 1960's reported that about one in five patients admitted to hospital suffered an injury due to a medical error and that about one in five of those injuries was serious or life threatening. Have things improved since then? We think so, but can't be sure. A recent study from Johns Hopkins University estimated that 250,000 deaths per year were attributable to medical errors in the United States. If true, medical errors would be the third leading cause of death - more than deaths from Alzheimer's disease and stroke combined. There were vehement protests from the medical community that this estimate was absurdly high. The medical community could well be right. The important point is that we do not know. Medicine does not have the same culture of admitting, reviewing, and investigating the mistakes that aviation has. And of course, if we don't analyze the causes of errors then developing effective means of reducing them will be difficult.

Similarly, in criminal justice system thanks largely to the development of reliable DNA analysis, more than 150 people have been exonerated in recent years after being convicted of capital crimes. Hundreds more have been exonerated for lesser crimes. However, as might be expected serious post-conviction investigations are rare, mistakes are seldom admitted, so we have no idea about the true error rate. We only know that previous claims of near infallibility cannot be true. How has this culture of error reduction developed so successfully in the airline industry and less successfully in other important realms? A key factor I believe is that unlike most of us, airlines really have no choice about admitting their mistakes. When an airplane crashes, the news is splashed across the media. As a consequence, all crashes are seriously investigated. In fact, because of the culture of safety that has developed in aviation over the years, even "incidents" or near crashes are investigated too. The main point of these investigations is not to place blame but to figure out what went wrong and to find ways to improve the system so that the mistake isn't repeated. Another factor may well be that many of those responsible for safety suffer very direct consequences if mistakes are made. Flight crews die in plane crashes too. And so the design of airplanes, maintenance practices, and safety training of flight crews have steadily improved.

Modern aviation is awash in checklists. In the cockpit, there are preflight checklists, takeoff checklists, before landing checklists, and of course a sheaf of emergency checklists. You might remember the famous "miracle on the Hudson" flight of 2009, in which Captain Chesley Sullenberger and First Officer Jeffrey Skiles successfully ditched their Airbus A320 in the Hudson River without the loss of even one of the 155 people on board after losing both engines soon after takeoff. What were they doing in the cockpit? While Sullenberger flew the plane, Skiles did what his training dictated. He immediately went to the engine failure and "ditch" checklists. Amazingly, he got through the entire "restart engine" checklist, which meant that he tried all available means of restarting the engines, in the three and a half minutes before the plane hit the water.

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4.What can you generalize from the case study based on information, was it a group culture organization?

Ans. Yes, Pan Am is Group Culture Organization, The academic and corporate analysis of crisis management achieved considerable impetus during the latter part of the 1980s with the occurrence of a number of major incidents which captured media attention. The terrorist bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 in December 1988 was one of the largest loss-of-life transport incidents of the decade and had serious implications for the integrity of the corporation. The bombing, whilst a discrete crisis event in itself, was part of a longer history of crisis through which the company had passed. The purpose of this paper is to explore the managerial response to crisis events within Pan Am and offer an assessment of the factors that ultimately led to the collapse of the corporation in 1991. Throughout the paper, attempts will also be made to set the events within the context of current thinking in crisis management and, in particular, to examine the demise of Pan Am within the context of a number of models of turnaround management developed within the literature. Pan American World Airways is known as a symbol of the historic days of aviation. While the airline was the largest international carrier in the United States until its demise in 1991, it was a founding member of the IATA. At its peak the airline also set two around the world records, both using the B747. The airline was fairly old when it ceased operations due to bankruptcy. Founded in 1927, the airline would be 91 had it survived to the present day. Instead, it ceased operations in 1991 at 64 years old. The Pan Am name lives on, however, and has now been adopted by a private rail transport company. Pan Am was originally incorporated is Pan American Airlines on 14th March 1927. The airline was founded as a shell company meaning it had no assets or employees, just a name and a bank account. Having raised $250,000 in start-up capital, the airline commenced operations on 19th of October that same year with a Fairchild FC-2 floatplane.

Despite a number of highly successful years throughout the 1970's, the airline eventually had to come to an end. Pan Am, having once called itself "The World's Most Experienced Airline", eventually filed for bankruptcy protection in January 1991. Due to rising fuel costs, as well as an inability to operate domestic routes the airline was starting to run at a loss. The airline also suffered from several public relations hits in 1988. This was the year that saw a Pan Am B747 crash in Lockerbie, sparking a $300 million lawsuit, as well as an additional fine from the FAA for 19 security failings. Delta claimed that Pan Am was losing around $3 million per day of operation in the later months of 1991. Requiring $25 million just to keep flying for another week, Pan Am was able to convince a bankruptcy judge that they were close to making a deal regarding continued operations with TWA on the 3rd December. As such the airline opened for business as usual on 4th of December, however, was shut down within an hour. Around 7,500 employees instantly lost their jobs. Although several airlines have tried to revive the Pan Am brand over the years, ultimately none have been successful. Today Pan Am's legacy lives on as one of the largest names in aviation history.

5.Write a summary of the case study and be more specific on what you understood out of this study.

Ans. Pan Am flight 103, also called Lockerbie bombing, flight of a passenger airliner operated by Pan American World Airways (Pan Am) that exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, on December 21, 1988, after a bomb was detonated. All 259 people on board were killed, and 11 individuals on the ground also died.

About 7:00 PM on December 21, Pan Am flight 103, a Boeing 747 en route to New York City from London, exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland. The plane had reached a height of approximately 31,000 feet (9,500 metres) and was preparing for the oceanic portion of the flight when a timer-activated bomb detonated. The bomb, constructed with the odourless plastic explosive Semtex, was hidden in a cassette player that was stored in a suitcase. The blast broke the plane into thousands of pieces that landed in an area covering roughly 850 square miles (2,200 square km). All 259 passengers and crew members were killed. Falling wreckage destroyed 21 houses and killed an additional 11 people on the ground. Although the passengers aboard the plane came from 21 countries, the majority of them were Americans, and the attack increased terrorism fears in the United States. Investigators believed that two Libyan intelligence agents were responsible for the bombing; many speculated that the attack had been retaliation for a 1986 U.S. bombing campaign against Libya's capital city, Tripoli. Libyan leader Muammar al-Qaddafi refused to turn over the two suspects. As a result, the United States and the United Nations Security Council imposed economic sanctions against Libya. In 1998 Qaddafi finally accepted a proposal to extradite the men. In 2001, after an investigation that involved interviewing 15,000 people and examining 180,000 pieces of evidence, Abdelbaset Ali Mohmed al-Megrahi was convicted of the bombing and sentenced to 20 (later 27) years in prison. The other man, Lamin Khalifa Fhimah, was acquitted. The Libyan government eventually agreed to pay damages to the families of the victims of the attack. In 2009 Megrahi, who had been diagnosed with terminal cancer, was released from prison in Scotland on compassionate grounds and allowed to return to Libya; the United States strongly disagreed with the Scottish government's decision. In July 2010 an investigation spurred by U.S. senators revealed that oil company BP had lobbied for a prisoner transfer agreement between the United Kingdom and Libya. Although both BP and the U.K. government denied that Megrahi was discussed specifically, in 2009 British justice minister Jack Straw had stated that BP's business dealings with the Libyan government were a factor in considering his case.

The plastic explosive that detonated in the forward cargo hold triggered a sequence of events that led to the rapid destruction of the aircraft. Winds scattered victims and debris along an 81-mile-long corridor 845 square miles in area.

The Lockerbie bombing became the subject of Britain's largest criminal inquiry led by its smallest police force, the Dumfries and Galloway Constabulary. This widely regarded assault on a symbol of the United States, with 189 of the victims being Americans, stood as the deadliest terrorist attack on American civilians until the attacks of September 11, 2001.

The determined investigation over more than 11 years was a jigsaw-puzzle assembly by many cooperating law-enforcement, intelligence, and legal personnel from numerous countries—including a CIA electronics expert who uncovered a key piece of evidence.

In 1989, months after the plane crash and end of the formal recovery effort, a piece of scorched shirt was discovered. The piece contained a fragment of circuit board that the heat of the explosion had fused into the shirt's polyester fabric.

The Scots photographed the circuit-board fragment and gave a photo to the FBI, who passed a copy to the CIA where a Directorate of Science & Technology (DS&T) electronics expert observed two things that reminded him of a device he had seen before—a timer from an earlier Libyan terrorist attack. Further analysis confirmed that the fragment exactly matched part of a timer circuit manufactured specifically for the Libyans.

The trial of two Libyans convened before a Scottish court in the Netherlands in 2000. CIA's DS&T officer was called to the stand as an expert witness. To protect his identity he was in disguise, used an alias, and had his voice altered. The CIA officer differentiated the timers of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command (PFLP-GC) from the ones used by the Libyans and identified the circuit-board fragment to be from a Libyan timer. These facts were crucial because the Libyans' defense rested on the premise that the PFLP-GC—not the Libyans—had bombed Pan Am 103.

Terrorists have always operated in secrecy, in part because America and its allies devote advanced technical resources to uncovering and thwarting their plans. While technical experts called in after a terrorist incident provide valuable assistance to those who seek justice, CIA experts in weapons, ordnance, electronics, and other fields work in the shadows to prevent such incidents. As a matter of pride to these experts who are accustomed to anonymity, few people know the details of their lifesaving contributions to combating terrorism.

In the case of Pan Am 103, the CIA expert's testimony on his identification of the circuit-board fragment was key evidence that led to the conviction of one of the two accused Libyan terrorists.