Crisis Management: Deep Water Horizon

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It is no secret that the oil drilling industry will encounter an oil spill. Oil pipes break, seals leak. Scale and magnitude are, however, unpredictable, for instance, the BP *Deepwater Horizon* blowout in 2010. BP managers made many decisions during its pinnacle crisis event—the Deepwater Horizon blowout, which in hindsight were suboptimal. The following will describe the events, discern the reasons BP made its decisions, and offer recommendations.

BP's *Deepwater Horizon* & Response

Americans were ripe with spin from the White House's "energy czar" in early 2010, when the Obama administration announced the opening the U.S. shores for offshore drilling, and then shortly thereafter, a catastrophic oil spill occurred in the Gulf of Mexico. Carol Browner, the first assistant to the president for energy and climate, aka the "energy czar" had downplayed the risk of expanding offshore drilling in March 2010. Then, on April 20, 2010, an explosion occurred 41 miles offshore from Louisiana on the *Deep Horizon*—an offshore oil rig belonging to BP, killing 11 people and injuring hundreds (Jacobs, 2016, p. 66). The cement barrier, "the blowout preventer," which was designed to control the seal at the wellhead and separate the oil from the outside environment failed (Swann, 2014, p. 204). The oil and gas leak burned uncontrollably for three days (Swann, 2014, p. 204). *Deepwater Horizon* continued to leak nearly five million barrels of oil over 84 days (Swann, 2014, p. 204). The oil spill eventually reached the shoreline and caused enormous and historic environmental, wildlife, and economic damage.

During this unprecedented disaster, BP tried… .