2009-01-07　New York Times

Summary:

Extraordinary times require extraordinary investor relations. To get a feel for how companies may alter their usual IR spiels, the New York Times takes a peak at G.E.'s December investor update. It notes that the presentation would have been better if it were shorter and used slides with even fewer words and graphics. Overall, however, the presentation scored high marks for:

- Owning up early to past mistakes in order to build credibility and move forward during the rest of the presentation.
- Simplifying the company by framing it according to the new context. GE put more emphasis on infrastructure than it had in the past.
- Omitting quarterly guidance because the future is too unpredictable.
- Not providing exact decisions (due to volatility), but usefully providing the criteria G.E. would use in allocating cash and other resources.
- Discussing the company's prospects following the recession by pointing to strengthened competitive position with fewer remaining competitors.
- Striking the right tone. G.E. showed a firm grasp of the operating environment, yet acknowledged the high degree of present volatility.

Link to Original:

http://dealbook.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/01/07/learning-from-ge-as-spin-season-approaches/?pagemode=print

With 20 million readers, The New York Times is the largest daily newspaper in the U.S., boasting the most accessed newspaper Web site.

Original Title:

Learning From G.E. as Spin Season Approaches