



Crisis Communications Management

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Crisis Management

- Crisis Management
- Incident Management

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Why Do Issues Become Crisis?

- Lack of information about a potential problem
- Compounding the problem by mishandling the issue
- Ignoring marketplace & social implications
- Refusing responsibility
- Not following the company's value system

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Preparing For A Crisis:

- Understand the issues that could effect your company
- Evaluate and assess your vulnerability
 - Intensity & urgency of the potential crisis
 - Possible impact on your business & reputation
 - Effect on your company's mission & values
- Roles & Responsibilities
 - Assign a spokesperson
 - Prioritize potential crises
- Track & monitor issues
- Develop a holding statement & other response materials
- Conduct table-top simulations periodically

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Costs of Mishandling a Crisis:

- Company reputation
- Competitor advantage
- Share price
- Distraction from business/employee concerns & performance
- Political backlash
- Financial costs of crisis handling
- Legal action and associated costs

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10 Things to Know About a Crisis:

1. Scale of a crisis - How it is handled, not what triggered it
2. Biggest cost associated with a crisis
 - Company's image
 - Marketplace
3. Good instinctive decision making and clear communications are vital
4. Adopt 'worse case scenario' planning
5. Emotional stories from eyewitnesses will be believed ahead of statements from company spokesperson

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10 Things to Know About a Crisis:

6. Defensiveness or silence is interpreted as admission of guilt
7. You cannot control the situation
8. You must make decisions without adequate information and in the spotlight
9. Others will take advantage of your problem to suit their own ends
10. Media will exaggerate the scale of the problem

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Do's & Don'ts:

- Do – Quickly communicate upwards and solicit direction
- Do – Base decision making and responses on your company's value system and reputation
- Do – Assign a Spokesperson
- Do – Prepare holding statement for media until facts are ascertained
- Do – Gather facts quickly
- Do – Consider all audiences
- Do – Control flow of information in and out
- Do – Create a distribution system for flow of information
- Do – Communicate as appropriate with external audiences (media, authorities, communities, opinion leaders, unions, suppliers, etc.)

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Do's & Don'ts:

- Do - Ensure your response includes the 4R's
Regret, Resolution & sometimes Restitution/
Responsibility
- Do - Provide context and framework around the
issue - don't allow adversaries to do it for you
- Do - Avoid rhetoric, finding scapegoats or anger
- Do - Operate as if facts are publicly known,
journalists have many sources including your
employees competitors and the internet
- Do - Constantly monitor and reappraise

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Do's & Don'ts:

- **Don't** - Think the problem will go away
- **Don't** - Lie or become combative
- **Don't** - Allow others to shape your reputation
- **Don't** - Underestimate the power of emotions to drive the public and political behavior
- **Don't** - Forget the Internet, it can make a minor local crisis into a major global one
- **Don't** - Refuse to make a short-term sacrifice to protect a more significant investment/reputation
- **Don't** - See only your point of view, consider that of stakeholders

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Understanding the Media:

- Looking for a good story
- Searching for cause or blame
- See themselves as public's surrogate
- May add their opinions and/or judgments

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Understanding the Media:

Interview Preparation:

- Know what you want to say beforehand
- Ask yourself the toughest questions and listen to your answer from the public point of view
- Think about the headlines you want to see when deciding your key messages
- Practice out loud, not in your head

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Understanding the Media:

Media Interviews:

- Project yourself as open and credible
- Focus on delivering key messages, not on conversation
- Support key messages with examples and evidence
- Take control – don't wait for the right questions
- Align with public concerns whenever possible
- Don't lie or get angry
- Avoid negative, defensive language or emotional outbursts

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Understanding the Media:

Media Interviews:

- Turn negatives into positives
- Project appropriate body language
- Don't speculate – if you don't know, offer to find out
- Don't speak for the competition or other organizations
- Don't be tempted to fill in silences
- End on a positive key message
- Don't accept the interview if you are not prepared