

Communicating in a crisis

How to best manage communications when time and accuracy counts

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Identify your Crisis Communications Team

- ❖ **One** group making decisions and **one** group/person communicating!
- ❖ Establish when you are meeting and what meetings you are involved in.
- ❖ The Communications Team needs to be driving communication strategy.
- ❖ Effective communication = effective management of the crisis

Establish a plan

- ❖ Communication needs move fast.
- ❖ Tell your audience how and where to get information.
- ❖ Plan for the communications to change quickly.
 - Defined plan for what, how and when you are sending it.
- ❖ Even if you don't have information in that moment, assure your audience that you will give them the information.

Establish notification and monitoring systems

- ❖ What systems do you have for communication?
- ❖ Which audiences do these tools communicate to?
- ❖ Can you monitor those tools to understand the communication need better?
- ❖ What are other tools you could be using?

Finalize and adapt messages

- ❖ *Fast but factual*
- ❖ Fact check and then double-check.
- ❖ Know your regulations and limitations.
- ❖ Truly weigh what employees or the public need to know.
- ❖ Plan for everything to be “public.”

Approval process

- ❖ Ensure the correct stakeholders have approved the message.
- ❖ Know how to get ahold of your approvers at any hour of the day.
- ❖ Do not wait for them to become available.

Review after-action

- ❖ What worked and what needs improvement?
- ❖ What do the metrics tell you?
- ❖ Always look hard at where you failed.

Build your Crisis Management Plan

- ❖ You never know when a crisis will arise, but you can plan for it now.

- ❖ Make plans for:
 - The contacts you would need to have on-hand
 - The notification tools

- ❖ Practice and train with different scenarios.

- ❖ You can never predict, but you can prepare.

- ❖ Never waste a crisis as an opportunity to grow.