

## Effective Crisis Management

Every organization and business will face a crisis at some point. How you handle anxiety and maintain trust with your stakeholders will determine the outcome. Planning with a strategy for communication and administering procedures will reduce anxiety and equip individuals to maintain trust during a crisis.

Leaders must display mental readiness to be a catalyst with extreme emotional discipline and intellectual rigor. The brain must be conditioned to not panic through desensitizing the brain -like law enforcement, firefighters, and the military. Leadership with humility and deep empathy for others will increase trust during and after the crisis. It is much harder to restore trust once lost. Maintain trust through smart choices in a timely manner.

Reputations are won or lost in a crisis. Leaders must be able to control the outcome, generally in the first moments of a crisis, with confidence. *This is done by asking the right questions first.* There is one common goal → to enhance trust in those that matter most to us.

Trust is the natural consequence of promises fulfilled, expectations met, and values lived. Your stakeholders expect a responsible organization to fulfill promises that care about people affected by the crisis-employees, donors, or the larger public. Your stakeholders are anyone that you depend on to trust your leadership.

**The cause is not the issue, people are what matter most.**

Maintaining the implied brand identity fulfills trust. If the trust fails so does the brand. During a crisis every stockholder expects the organization to care about the crisis, the human judgement that failed, and victims with needs. CARE is the priority always. Indifference is TOXIC to an organization Persistent demonstration of care, if necessary, is the burden of the leadership.

Never diminish the crisis, pass blame, or show indifference. Acknowledge the crisis, show true sympathy, recognition of failure, and then suspend operations and pursue legal ramifications as needed. Control of the crisis first, before media or critics, alleviates adverse interpretation of the event.

A standard protocol ready for communication during a crisis will help with *First Move Advantage*:

- Acknowledge the crisis publicly
- Empathy towards victims
- Commitment to values-safety of others, communicate when updates are available, and actions taken
- Approach and actions taken to address the crisis
- Commitment to the organization and stakeholders

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If you do not respond in first 45 minutes of a crisis with care toward others you begin to lose trust and risk the well being of the organization. Social media, texts, videos, and media will shape the way you are perceived in the future.

When do you respond? If you can answer YES to any of the bullets below respond NOW.

- Will those that matter to use expect an immediate response?
- Will silence show indifference?
- Are others talking about you changing the way you are perceived?
- If we wait will we lose the ability to influence the outcome?

Gather allies to leverage positive messaging, positive actions, and to be ambassadors of the brand or organization.

Leaders focus on the now, determine the right approach, are committed, demonstrate a high level of motivation, act ethically, readily take action, and have a mission oriented positive attitude to get it done.

***We don't remember things handled well, only the failures. When you are prepared and handle a crisis well, productivity increases, morale goes up, stock increases, and trust is maintained!***

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