

Don't React: Act. Crisis Communication Checklist

Step Zero: Prepare Now

- Identify potential crises relevant to your organization.
- Develop a crisis communication plan with clear roles and responsibilities
- Create a contact list

Spokesperson phone & email:

- Establish monitoring systems to detect early signs of crises.

Social media contact phone & email:

Step One: Identify the Crisis

- Gather initial facts to understand the situation. Maintain curiosity mindset.
- Recognize the nature and scope of the crisis.

- Does it have elements to trend?

Yes: Develop response-to-query holding statement

No: Monitor situation and sources (social media) for escalation

- Does it trigger an emotional response?

Yes: Develop a response-to-query statement

No: Monitor situation and document for future questions

- Yes to both questions: Continue checklist to prepare initial statement

Step Two: Approach with Empathy

- Acknowledge the impact of the crisis on those affected.
- Show genuine concern and understanding in all communications.

Step Three: Determine Who Needs to Know

- Identify key audiences (employees, customers, media, public).
- Prioritize communication based on the urgency and importance to each group.

Step Four: Research the Situation

- Collect accurate and up-to-date information about the crisis.
- Double-check facts before releasing any statements.

Step Five: Craft Statements

- Develop clear and concise messages addressing the concerns of your audiences.
- Include key information: what happened, what you're doing about it, and what actions others should take. Make no assumptions.

Step Six: Coordinate the Plan

- Align your team and ensure everyone understands their roles.
- Coordinate with partners and external stakeholders as needed.

Step Seven: Schedule Your Releases

- Plan the timing of your communications to manage the flow of information.
- Use multiple channels (social media, email, phone app notification, voicemail outgoing message, website, chat bot, customer service, press releases) to reach your audiences.

Step Eight: Evaluate Reactions

- Monitor responses to your communications.
- Adjust your strategy based on feedback and changing circumstances.

Step Nine: Build Relationships

- Engage with stakeholders regularly, not just during crises.
- Foster trust and credibility through consistent and transparent communication.

Step Ten: Repeat As Needed

- If the situation changes, repeat checklist back to step one.
- If audience still has questions, repeat checklist back to step four, something is missing.
- Slowing of commentary online and questions means audience has enough information