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INTRODUCTION

Section 1: Why is this Necessary?

Your response a crisis (or even bad publicity) can affect your organization's reputation. Crisis management is always evolving, but there are ways to plan and prepare for a crisis so when the worst happens, you're ready. With a solid plan in place, you'll be prepared for whatever comes your way. This crisis communication template will help your organization develop your own unique, tailored crisis management plan.

What Constitutes a Crisis?

It's important to define the terms first. A crisis can have a long-lasting negative effect on your organization's reputation or mission. It's a significant and unexpected event which creates uncertainty, and may dramatically impact your organization's ability to operate normally if not handled in an appropriate fashion. An example of a crisis might be a scandal with leadership or a natural disaster that keeps your organization from fulfilling its mission.

On the other hand, an issue is something that can be resolved fairly quickly and easily. It's still negative for your organization, but it's not long-lasting. A few negative comments on your nonprofit's Facebook feed doesn't constitute a crisis. And while the proper response is important, it's only a small part of a crisis response plan.

What is a Crisis Communications Plan?

A crisis management plan allows organizations to more easily apply strategies to deal with sudden and significant negative events. A thorough crisis management or crisis communication plan facilitates speedy communication to ensure the overall safety of an organization's internal and external stakeholders.

The importance of a Crisis Communication Plan

According to the Department of Homeland Security, an organization must be able to respond promptly, accurately and confidently during an emergency and in the hours and days that follow. Multiple different audiences must be reached with information specific to their interests and needs. The image of the organization can be positively or negatively impacted by the public and community's perception of how the incident was handled.

Feel free to jot down what you want to get from a crisis communication plan:

Crisis Plan Objectives

The information in this crisis template will guide your planning team through addressing the following areas:

- Forming a crisis communication team
- Developing a process to communicate with employees, board members and volunteers for safety and well-being and for informing them of decisions and expectations
- Developing a process to make sure all external stakeholders and constituents are aware of decisions and expectations
- Managing donor, volunteer, community and key vendor communications
- Preparing a media communications and interview plan
- Shortening the news cycle
- Ensuring a tactical communication system exists to address all audiences and stakeholders through various channels

Add in any additional objectives that your organization sees fit:

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An Important Note on Research & Content

This guide is a compilation of research, templates, visuals and best practices on crisis communication, tailored to the nonprofit industry.

For more information, you can find the online sources used throughout the plan below.

General Content Sources:

- Ready.gov
- Spinweb Crisis Guide, Spinweb Social Media Crisis, Spinweb Crisis Examples
- Northern Illinois University
- Nonprofit MarCommunity
- Paradigm Solutions International
- Nonprofit Marketing Guide.com
- Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
- iMedia
- U.S. Department of Education

Crisis/Internal Tactics Resources:

- Gridgit
- Hubspot
- University of Washington
- The Ohio State University

- Northern Illinois University
- 24Point0

PREPAREDNESS

Section 2: What to Do in Preparation of a Crisis

Risk Assessment/Plan for the Worst Case Scenario

We don't like to think in extreme or worst case scenarios, but when developing a crisis plan, it's a good thing to sit down and think about. Gather your team and talk through what constitutes a true crisis for your organization. Think of the most obvious scenarios and the effects they could have and how they could be made worse. Draft a brief response for each scenario to better prepare for "when" the worst happens.

Jot down a few of your worst case scenarios:

The Crisis Communication Team

It's important to decide who will be the first person to respond to an issue or crisis. Maybe it's your Executive Director, or maybe it's your Board President or Director of Communications. You might even want to make a few different plans based on your worst case scenarios. Create some ideas for how that person could address the crisis. This will also help prevent a staff member from going rogue and making the situation worse.

You'll also want to think about who will be responsible for writing, approving and posting further updates, whether or not you will respond individually and the timeframe for how long you intend to provide updates. Nothing needs to be set in stone, but having a loose idea will be invaluable during the rush of a crisis.

Fill in these chart to establish your communications team based on your worst case scenarios:

Worst Case Scenario 1				
Name	**Title**	**Office / Work**	**Cell**	**Email Address**

Worst Case Scenario 2				
Name	**Title**	**Office / Work**	**Cell**	**Email Address**

Worst Case Scenario 3				
Name	**Title**	**Office / Work**	**Cell**	**Email Address**

Next, fill in this task-based chart and add in more or less tasks as needed. You'll want to refer to this chart throughout a crisis, so make sure it's as detailed as it can be.

Communications Recovery Team Timeline						
	Call-in phone number:		***** Key Dates*****			
Task #	**Task Description**	**Primary Team Lead**	**Target Start**	**Target Complete**	**Actual Complete**	
1	Crisis-specific key messages and updates					
2	Crisis response center set up and management					
3	Spokesperson preparation					
4	Media (social & traditional), email, voicemail monitoring and response					
5	Incoming phone/email logs					
6	Media communications					
7	Board communications					
8	Employee communications					
9	Volunteer communications					
10	Donor communications					
11	Vendor communications					
12	Government official outreach					
13						
14						
15						

General Audiences to Consider for Communications:

- Constituents
- Donors
- Board Members
- Volunteers
- Survivors impacted by the incident and their families
- Employees and their families

- News media & Social Media audiences
- Community (especially neighbors living near the facility)
- Organization management, leadership and directors
- Government elected officials
- Vendors

Establish & Create a Safety Regulations Plan

Here's a Sample Safety Regulations Plan with some general safety tips. Feel free to add in additional safety concerns at the bottom of this list.

Weather Related Emergencies:

- In the event of severe weather, such as tornadoes, earthquakes or severe weather warnings, all precautionary measures should be taken as the building will be secured until such time that it is deemed safe to leave.
- In the event of a tornado or earthquake, all personnel will be required to move into respective safety positions until it is deemed safe to move.
- 911 should be called if any damage or injuries occur.

Fire Emergencies:

- In the event of a fire, all personnel in the building will be asked to evacuate the premises quickly and efficiently, while ensuring that those around them are also evacuating.
- In the event of a small, containable fire, a fire extinguisher can be used, using the PASS method. The PASS method consists of:
    - **P**ull the safety pin from the handle
    - **A**im the nozzle at the base of the fire, not at the flames
    - **S**queeze the handle slowly
    - **S**weep from side to side while keeping a safe distance from the fire
- 911 should be called if any damage or injuries occur.

Evacuations:

- In any event where an evacuation is necessary, all personnel should exit the building quickly and in an orderly fashion contingent upon their emergency exit plans.
- All doors and exits should be cleared of any obstructions.

Shooting Situation:

- In the event of a potential shooting situation, all personnel should remain behind locked doors until such time as the situation is averted.
- 911 should be called if any damages or injuries occur.

Injuries:

- In any event where an injury occurs, proper medical treatment, including first aid kits, should be utilized, and 911 should be called for serious medical injury.

Communication:

- To prevent or deal with any crisis event, all personnel should remain in contact with an immediate supervisor if applicable.
- A notification e-mail system can also be used in the event of a crisis.
- In the case of a power outage, cell phones can be used to make any necessary emergency phone calls.

General Communications Guidelines

Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce provides their guidelines for general, pre-crisis communications:

- It's important to establish an employee notification process with redundancies. Check at least two of the following communication strategies that you will implement:

A 24-hour phone tree	

Password-protected web page for employee access	

Email alert	

Call-in recording system	

Text/data alert system	

- Create a key constituent list and notification process for communications

Key Constituent List	Notification Process

- Create critical vendor, key supplier and alternate supplier lists and notification process for communications

Vendor & Supplier List	Notification Process

- Add a copy of the media (social and traditional) policy to employee handbooks and make sure all employees are aware of it
- Conduct crisis training for all potential team members
- Provide each staff member a laminated card with contact information for his/her assigned supervisor and other department contacts
- Give supervisors laminated cards with contact information for the crisis management team
- Give employees laminated cards with Google Voice phone number and key crisis communications protocols

Messaging 101 - Anticipating What to Say

Messaging Introduction

While it's impossible to develop messages for every possible scenario in advance, it's important to use your organization's existing message platform as a foundation to build on for more specific messaging in response to the situation at hand.To be most effective, messages should be clear, concise, and to the point.

Pro tip: Include your organization's general message/platform as part of your crisis communications plan, and update as needed.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, pre-scripted messages should be prepared using information developed during the risk assessment. The risk assessment/worst case scenario process should identify situations that would require communications with stakeholders. There may be many different scenarios but the need for communications will relate more to the impacts or potential impacts of an incident:

- Accidents that injure employees, volunteers or others

Pre-Scripted Message	Stakeholder(s) to Receive Message

- Property damage to organization facilities

Pre-Scripted Message	Stakeholder(s) to Receive Message

- Liability associated injury to or damage sustained by others

Pre-Scripted Message	Stakeholder(s) to Receive Message

- Production or service interruptions

Pre-Scripted Message	Stakeholder(s) to Receive Message

- Chemical spills or releases with potential off-site consequences, including environmental product quality issues

Pre-Scripted Message	Stakeholder(s) to Receive Message

Practice and Anticipate

Whether it’s practicing media training, setting up a crisis simulation or just reading through and familiarizing yourself with the plan, extra preparedness is always a good idea. Practicing potential tough interview questions based on your worst case scenarios is also not a bad idea.

Worst Case Scenarios	Practice Interview Questions

RESPONSE

Section 3: What to Do During a Crisis

Immediate, Decisive Action

As soon as you find out about the crisis, it should be your communication team's number one and first priority. You shouldn't be hasty, but the longer a crisis goes unacknowledged, the worse it looks for your organization. According to iMedia, It's important to make sure that you're out there responding to and updating your constituents in a timely manner. Remember to refer back to your crisis communication team and task charts from the preparedness stage.

Initial Prepared Statement

If you don't communicate immediately, you lose your greatest opportunity to control events. Your first news or press release should include at a minimum the who, what, when and where of the situation.

According to Northern Illinois University, you must give the facts that have been gathered from reliable sources *and* confirmed. Don't over reach and don't speculate. There's a limit to your role, and to exceed that limit is a mistake. If you do nothing more than show concern for the public and for your employees in your first press interaction, you are already on the right track. If your employees and customers don't feel like insiders, they're going to act like outsiders.

You must have a prepared statement on hand that can be used to make an initial general response to the media when knowledge about the crisis first becomes known on a widespread basis or by reporters.

As the crisis progresses and new information and facts become available, it's also a good idea to develop prepared statements to be made by the spokesperson or crisis team lead at the onset of any media interview, briefing or news conference, which we go into later in this chapter.

These prepared statements also can be read over the telephone to reporters who call to request information but are not represented at news conferences or briefings. The statement can also be sent via email upon request.

Jot down your prepared statement here:

Fact Gathering Phase

It's very important to know all of the facts before making a well-informed statement to your publics. Fact gathering is an extensive stage in this process.

If you don't have all the information you need within an hour of the crisis occurring, starting off with more broad, reactionary statements, and then stating that you're learning everything you can about the situation, are great ways to start. Once you have all the facts at your disposal you can be more specific.

Information that's been corroborated	Information that's still unknown

Crisis Command Center

As mentioned in the previous section, setting up a crisis response center should be on your tasks list. According to Northern Illinois University, you'll want to first select a place to be used as a media center. It should be some distance from the crisis communication team and spokesperson's desks to ensure that media are not in the middle of the action if they happen to take the wrong turn or have to pass by those offices or areas on the way to the restrooms.

Your command center should include:

- Copies of the response plan, prepared statements and crisis & communication team contact information
- Computers and phones
- Internet and phone/cell phone access with multiple phone lines available
- Scanner and copier access
- Media and social media monitoring software
- Media contact lists (print and digital versions)
- Social media, monitoring sites and web login information
- Emergency supplies

- Anything else that your organization might need to handle the crisis effectively

Messaging 102 - Fully Crafting Your Response Statement

Responding to the Crisis Messaging Plan

The Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce offers this advice on crisis communications and responding to the messaging plan:

- Convene the communications team to act on communications-related strategic objectives issued by the management team.

- Develop a specific communication plan relevant to the actual circumstances. The plan will include:

    - Audiences identified and prioritized. Refer to your General Audiences List in the Crisis Communication Team section of chapter 2 (preparedness).

    - Communications mechanisms for each. Refer to your previous messaging and stakeholder charts in the Messaging 101 section of chapter 2.

    - Responsibilities and timelines for follow-up clearly delineated, using the Communications Recovery Team Timeline template introduced in chapter 2.

- Assign a team member to create a secure timeline of the actual events related to the crisis and responses undertaken. Only one person should have this responsibility to ensure accuracy and integrity of the information. This task has been highlighted and added to the Communications Recovery Team Timeline chart below.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="7">Communications Recovery Team Timeline</th></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">Call-in phone number:</td><td colspan="3">*** Key Dates***</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><th>Task #</th><th>Task Description</th><th>Primary Team Lead</th><th>Target Start</th><th>Target Complete</th><th colspan="2">Actual Complete</th></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Crisis-specific key messages and updates</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr>
</table>

2	Crisis response center set up and management					
3	Spokesperson preparation					
4	Media (social & traditional), email, voicemail monitoring and response					
5	Incoming phone/email logs					
6	Media communications					
7	Board communications					
8	Employee communications					
9	Volunteer communications					
10	Donor communications					
11	Vendor communications					
12	Government official outreach					
13	Create a secure timeline of the actual events related to the crisis and responses undertaken					

The following communication bullet points and tasks can and should be added to your Communications Recovery Team Timeline if not already on there, as shown above ^^

- Notify other personnel needed to manage the crisis (can be pulled from communication team), including employees assigned to:
    - Handle the phone and maintain phone log of incoming calls and actions taken
    - Monitor incoming email, website/blog comments and social media accounts
    - Track media (traditional, blogs and social media coverage and mentions)
- Craft key messages related to the specific scenario, drawing on general message points. Refine on an ongoing basis as needed.
- Identify and prepare the spokesperson most appropriate for the situation.
- Prepare possible response statements for telephone, email, text messages, website, social media and crisis-site inquiries using key messages.

- Make sure your crisis response center is set up accurately and with copies of the crisis communications response plan, the response statement and contact information for all members of the crisis management team and communications team, which were established in chapter 2.

- Assign responsibility to create and maintain phone and email logs of news organizations/reporters/bloggers/websites covering the crisis and any other key personnel, client, vendor partner, etc., who may be inquiring about the situation.

- Begin contacting those affected by the crisis. Identify best mechanisms to reach each person, including phone, face-to-face meetings, conference calls, email, Internet, media briefing, press release, instant alerts, etc. Make specific assignments and include on the timeline.

- Avoid a media crisis with response statements posted on your nonprofit’s website home page and social media feeds as appropriate. If crisis warrants, develop additional online pages to include press releases, photos, etc. Update all as needed.

- Set regular times for communicating updates as needed.

- Contact local emergency officials and government officials as necessary.

- Make sure those affected by the crisis are being kept informed through regular phone updates, email updates, RSS feeds, text messages, Intranet messages, etc.

- Keep your timeline updated, documenting all actions taken and team member responsible and make accessible to all crisis management team members to review.

Frequently Asked Questions During a Crisis

Consistent messaging is needed for all of these common questions when responding to a crisis. Feel free to add more questions and groups of your own to this list provided by the Department of Homeland Security.

Groups Asking Questions	FAQs	Messaging
Constituents	“When can I expect services to be back up and running?”	

Employees	“When should I report to work?” “Will I have a job?” “Will I get paid during the shutdown or can I collect unemployment?” “What happened to my co-worker?” “What are you going to do to address my safety?” “Is it safe to go back to work?”	
Government Regulator	“When did it happen?” “What happened (details about the incident)?” “What are the impacts (injuries, deaths, environmental contamination, safety of consumers, etc.)?”	
Elected Official	“What is the impact on the community (hazards and economy)?” “How many employees will be affected?” “When will you be back up and running?”	
Suppliers/Vendors	“When should we resume deliveries and where should we ship to?”	
Management/ Leadership	“What happened?” “When did it happen?” “Was anyone injured?” “How bad is the property damage?” “How long do you think production will be down?”	

Neighbors/Community Members	“How can I be sure it’s safe to go outside?” “What are you going to do to prevent this from happening again?” “How do I get paid for the loss I incurred?”	
News Media	“What happened?” “Who was injured?” “What is the estimated loss?” “What caused the incident?” “What are you going to do to prevent it from happening again?” “Who is responsible?”	

Responding on Social Media

When creating a crisis management plan, a big component is a strong social media foundation. This is the 21st century, which means you can’t ignore social media or the internet. According to Spinweb, you should understand how to use social media and how to integrate community engagement in your organization's culture. You need the basic tools, training and know-how to empower your employees to manage social media. But how you prepare your employees to respond to a crisis on social media? The first step is assigning your social media tasks and point person, which you should have already done in previous steps. Here are a few more tips from Spinweb to help out, though.

Social Media Issues to Avoid to Keep a Crisis at Bay:

- Accidentally sending a personal message from one of your organization's accounts
- Using a trending topic or hashtag on Twitter inappropriately or offensively
- Unintentionally opening a can of worms by starting your own hashtag
- Deleting comments and pretending like it didn't happen
- Taunting a competitor or other organization, which could backfire
- Trying too hard at being clever, funny or timely

Social Media Crisis Management Lessons:

- Be careful using Hootsuite! And, be honest with your fans/followers when you make a mistake. Social media folks are very forgiving, as long as you don't use dishonest tactics to hide your mistakes. That's the ultimate no-no when handling crises through social media.

- Be sensitive to the power of social media. Even a small issue like a silly comment or an unintentional coincidence that gets picked up by others on social media can quickly snowball into a crisis. Address even small complaints from your fans, constituents, or others with grace and good sense.

- Keep your personal and professional social media accounts separate. Don't fall victim to a distracted click in Hootsuite that accidentally posts your personal thoughts to the wrong account. Catching mistakes early and issuing a sincere apology could save some face.

- Always check a hashtag's meaning before you use it.

- Think about *all* the possible results of starting a new hashtag. You could be starting something you can't or don't want to finish. Consider using a separate Twitter handle to experiment with a particular campaign.

- People can see when you delete comments and it may make your brand look really bad. If you get negative feedback on Facebook, answer the questions honestly and move on. Responding to negative comments, feedback or questions online can actually be a good thing for your organization's brand. Reviews -- even negative ones -- play a key role for buyers and stakeholders. Buyers who seek out negative reviews are 67 percent more likely to convert to a purchase than the average consumer (Revoo study).

- As mentioned above, mocking other organizations can backfire, so think it through first.
- Make sure both the timing and tone are right before you try to be funny or clever on social media.

Handling Media Interviews

Initial Media Briefing:

**All of the below points from the Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce are organized into a chart for you to fill out.

- Identify media to notify
- Designate site to hold briefing (away from site of crisis hub if possible) or call-in number/web address if briefing will be handled by conference call or web conference
- Make media materials (statements, backgrounders, photos, infographics) available and copies of response statement (both online and hard copies) as needed
- Designate an employee to keep a log of media in attendance so coverage can be tracked later
- Engage a media and social media monitoring service to monitor coverage

Media to Notify	Briefing Site	Media Materials to Prepare	Employee to Log Media Present

Practicing Tough Questions

A crisis situation is always difficult when dealing with the media. Therefore, tough questions and rehearsals are necessary to help the spokesperson prepare.

According to Northern Illinois University, at the onset of the crisis, it's important that the spokesperson, backup and crisis and communications teams spend some time rehearsing prepared statements and answers to possible "tough" questions that may be asked by reporters based on the situation at hand. If possible, similar rehearsals should be conducted prior to each media interview, briefing or news conference. It is also important to anticipate and practice new questions as the story evolves.

Don't volunteer information unless it is a point the company wants to make and the question hasn't been asked. Don't talk off the record. These questions and answers should be for internal use only and not for distribution outside the organization.

Feel free to use a similar format to the Risk Assessment/Worst Case Scenario section.

Media Questions	Prepared/Practiced Answers

Tips and Guidelines

Northern Illinois University provides their general tips, guidelines, and do’s and don’ts for handling media interviews.

How To prepare for Broadcast Interviews:

- Prepare a "talking paper" on primary points you want to make
- Anticipate questions--prepare responses ahead of time
- Practice answering questions
- Cover controversial areas ahead of time
- Know who will be interviewing you, if possible
- Determine how much time is available

Audiences often remember impressions, not facts

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Do's and Don'ts During the Interview process:

- Do build bridges
- Do use specifics
- Do use analogies
- Do use contrasts and comparisons
- Do be enthusiastic/animated
- Do be your casual likable self
- Do be a listener
- Do be cool
- Do be correct
- Do be anecdotal

If you don't have the answer or can't answer, do admit it and move on to another topic

- Don't fall for that "A or B" dilemma
- Don't accept "what if" questions
- Don't accept "laundry list" questions
- Don't go off the record
- Don't think you have to answer every question

- Don't speak for someone else --beware of the absent-party trap

How To Handle Yourself During A TV Talk Show Interview:

- Audio check-- use regular voice
- If makeup is offered, use it
- Sit far back in the chair, back erect, but lean forward to appear enthusiastic and force yourself to use hands
- Remember, TV will frame your face--be calm, use high hand gestures, if possible
- Keep eyes on interviewer-- not on camera
- Smile, be friendly

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Tips On Appearance:

- Avoid wearing pronounced stripes, checks or small patterns
- Grey, brown, blue or mixed colored suits/dresses are best
- Grey, light-blue, off-white or pastel shirts or blouses are best
- Avoid having hair cut right before interview

How To Respond During A Newspaper Interview:

- Obtain advanced knowledge of interview topics
- Make sure you are prepared in detail; print reporters are often more knowledgeable than broadcast reporters and my ask more detailed questions
- Begin the interview by making your point in statement by making your major points in statement form
- Try to maintain control of the interview
- Don't let the reporter wear you down
- Set a time limit in advance
- Don't get so relaxed that you say something you wish you hadn't
- Avoid jargon or professional expressions
- Reporter may repeat self in different ways to gain information you may not want to give
- Don't answer inappropriate questions; simply say it is "not an appropriate topic for you to address at this time," or "it's proprietary" for example
- Be prepared for interruptions with questions. It is legitimate for reporters to do that
- Do not speak "off the record"
- Remember, the interview lasts as long as a reporter is there

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After The Interview:

- You can ask to check technical points, but do not ask to see advance copy of the story
- Never try to go over reporter's head to stop a story
- Do not send gifts to reporters--it is considered unethical for them to accept them.

Extras Tips to Think About

Address the Crisis Where it Happened

You should of course address the crisis on multiple media, however, if applicable, you should also make sure you're addressing the crisis on the channel that it occurred. For example, if the situation first occurred on YouTube, your organization would benefit from creating an apology and/or explanation video and uploading it to your nonprofit's YouTube channel.

Take Responsibility, Don't Point Fingers - Only Worry About Addressing Your Brand's Role

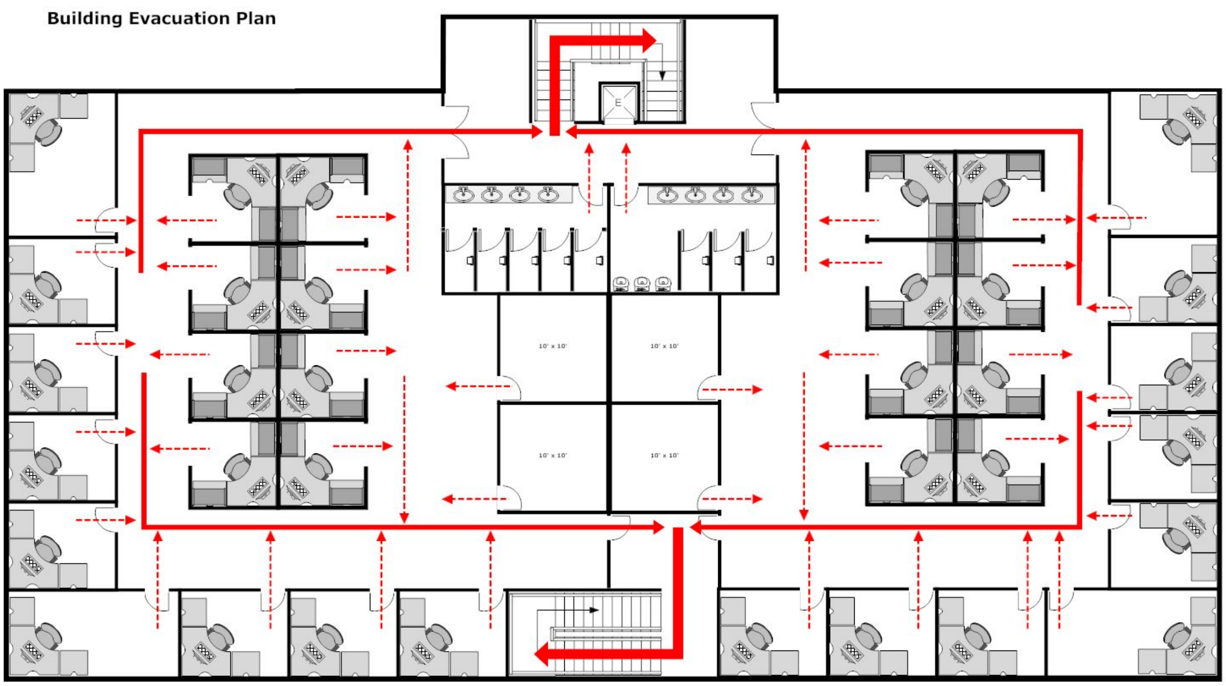
Make amends. Your actions always speak louder than words in these situations. The best thing your nonprofit can do is to address its role in the crisis, take responsibility and announce how you will make amends and prevent this type of situation from happening in the future. Provide help for any employees, volunteers or victims who might need it. This step is important to demonstrate that your organization is trustworthy and that you're taking steps to protect the public and your constituents.

Crisis Tactics

The following are tactics that should be considered during a crisis:

- Emergency exit plan/map for employees and volunteers
- Crisis FAQ sheet
- Press Release

Emergency Exit Plan Sample from Gridgit:



- **Crisis FAQ Sheet should include the following information:**
    - Acknowledgement of the crisis
    - Details about what happened
    - Post photos or videos, if available
    - Mention how the company found out
    - Dive into specifics: who was alerted, when and how
    - List out specific actions you’ve taken in response
    - List real or possible effects of the occurrence
    - List the steps that have been taken to prevent a future occurrence
    - List contact information for real people at the company

Press Release Template from Northern Illinois University:

A ____________________ at _____________________ involving ___________________ occurred today at ________________ . The incident is under investigation and more information is forthcoming.
A (what happened) at (location) involving (who) occurred today at (time). The incident is under investigation and more information is forthcoming.

For instance:

An explosion at 1210 Market Street, the main plant for the Acme Toy Company occurred today at 3 p.m. The incident is under investigation and more information is forthcoming.

You could put down a definitive time for the next news conference or release of information if you know it but it is not necessary. This won't solve your problems, but may buy you enough time to prepare for the next news conference or release.

You could also add information if it is available such as how many casualties there are known up to this point or any other pertinent information available. Once again, this information should be definitive and not speculative, verify everything you say. This will help your credibility in the long run.

Informational Collateral Materials to Consider:

- Organization fact sheet
- Informational brochures
- Backgrounder
- Blog posts queued

Fact Sheet Sample from the University of Washington:

Fact Sheet Template/Set-up Example from The Ohio State University:

Fact Sheet Title Goes Here

Author Name, Title, Department, Unit/Program/Association, Organization. You can use two or more lines here if necessary to include all of the information.

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Blog Post Outline/Template from Hubspot:

Introduction - Set the stage and explain why the problem you're about to solve is even a problem.

Have you ever tried to ___________? If so, you'll know that it's difficult because ___________________________. So what do you do? Many people have found success by using ___________________. But there are a few things you should know before you buy and implement a ___________ to ensure ____________. This post will tell you what you need to know to make sure you select a ____________________ that will let you successfully ________________.

Body - Explains the solution(s) to the problem you've introduced.

If you're looking for a _____________, the best method to ensure you end up with something that lets you _________________ is by looking for these things:

Make sure your ____________ lets you _______________. If it doesn't, you'll have trouble ___________.
Ensure your ___________ has a ____________ so you can ____________.
Any good ______________ should let you _____________. This is important because _________________.
While not necessary, some great bonus features of a great _____________ are __________, ____________, and _______________.

Conclusion - Wraps up with a reflection of the problem you've solved

Now that you know ________________, you're ready to __________________ without worrying _______________.

And once you fill in the blanks, you'll get something like this:

Have you ever tried to **monitor your business' social media account**? If so, you'll know that it's difficult because **updates move at the speed of light**. So what do you do? Many people have found success by using **a social media monitoring tool**. But there are a few things you should know before you buy and implement a **social media monitoring tool** to ensure **you don't end up with something that takes up more time than manually monitoring**. This post will tell you what you need to know to make sure you select a **social media monitoring tool** that will let you successfully **stay up to date on your fans' and followers' conversations with little time investment**.

If you're looking for a **social media monitoring tool,** the best method to ensure you end up with something that lets you **monitor quickly** is by looking for these things:

- Make sure your **social media monitoring tool** lets you **hook up accounts across all your social networks**. If it doesn't, you'll have trouble **keeping track of what people are saying on Twitter one second, and Facebook the next**.
- Ensure your **social media monitoring tool** has a **keyword alert function** so you can **input keywords that are important to your business and get alerted when someone mentions them on social media**.
- Any good **social media monitoring tool** should let you **schedule posts**. This is important because **a social presence needs to be fed with content constantly, but that task can be more efficient with a one-time bulk upload**.

While not necessary, some great bonus features of a great **social media monitoring tool** are **lead and customer attribution by social channel**, **CRM integration**, and **closed-loop analytics**.

Now that you know **what to look for in social media monitoring tools**, you're ready to **start shopping** without worrying **you'll purchase a tool that takes more time than it's worth**.

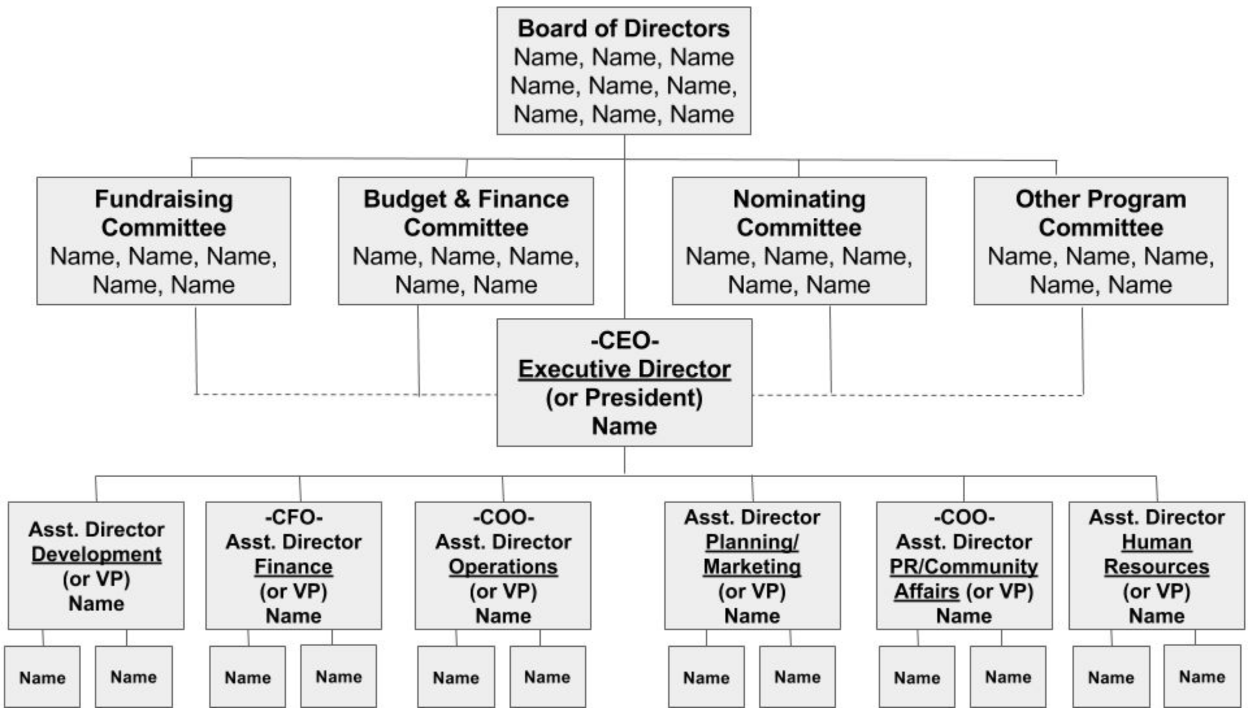
Internal Communication is Key

Good internal communication involves regular and effective two-way communication with all members of staff at all levels and is a critical success factor that should be at the helm of any organization. It not only leads to increased morale and staff engagement, it has a knock-on effect on the performance of employees and, in turn, on the reputation of the organization.

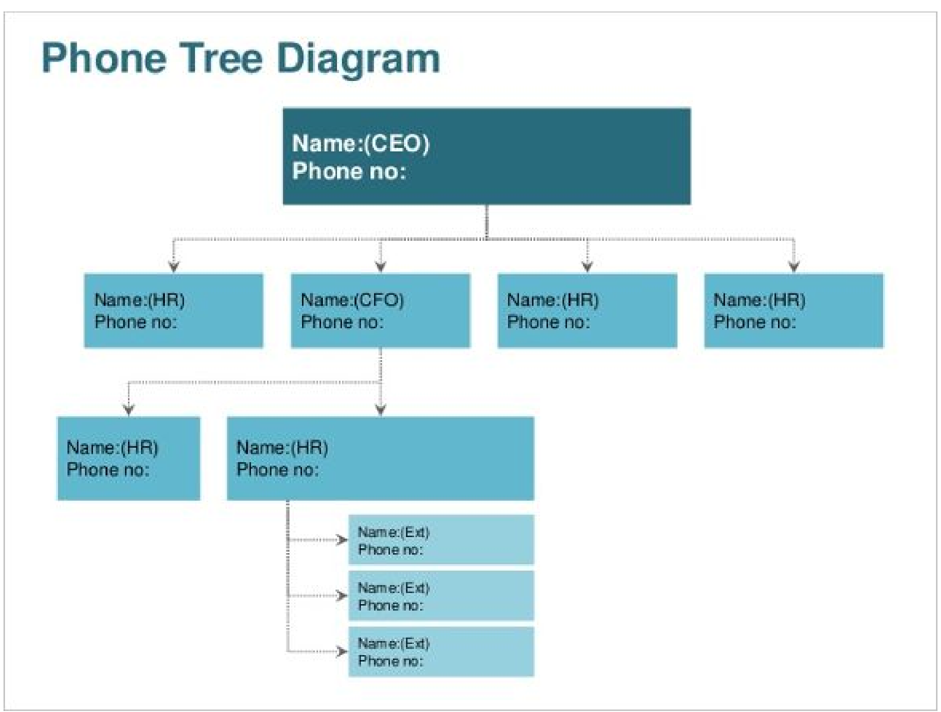
Internal Crisis Tactics:

- Organizational Chart/Chain of Command
- Phone Tree

Sample Organizational Chart:



Sample Phone Tree from 24Point0:



Employee Communications during a Crisis

The Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce provides its tips on employee communication in the event of a crisis:

- Use available communication vehicles (email, texts, Google phone, Intranet, etc.) to call staff to action as needed.
- Hold a short briefing meeting onsite, or at a predetermined offsite location or via conference call, to reassure staff members and prepare them for crisis management.
- Remind staff of existing media (social and traditional) policies.
- If the company's offices are accessible, designate a specific conference room or office for all staff members to convene and receive more information.
- If the offices are not accessible, employees can access information via Google Voice phone number (get your number at https://www.google.com/voice), email and Intranet.
- Set predetermined times for staff members to reconvene to receive regular updates and guidance.
- Provide staff with key messages to communicate to customers, constituents and vendors as appropriate, which should already have been determined earlier in this chapter.
- Provide all employees with a laminated wallet card with Google Voice phone number and key emergency communication protocols.

Crisis Spokesperson Presentation Checklist

Checklist of Do's and Don'ts

Northern Illinois University provides their do's and don'ts for your crisis spokesperson's presentation.

The Do's

When preparing to give a speech,

- Use a full script with LARGE TYPE for easy reading
- Leave wide margin for notes to yourself
- Leave pages unstapled for easier handling at podium
- Highlight and mark your script to guide your delivery
- Time your presentation to fit the program schedule of the group you will address
- Practice: Read it aloud using a mirror and tape recorder until it sounds like you are talking, not reading
- Be sure you have the facts about your audience-size, contact person's name, facility, etc.
- Based on your audience and your presentation, determine what, if any, equipment you will use. If you are not familiar with the equipment, contact the Communications Department to arrange a briefing on how to use slide projectors, video players or overhead equipment

~

When you arrive at your engagement,

- Be at least 15 minutes early
- Check equipment in advance if possible

Slides:

- Be sure slides are in correct order and are clearly focused
- Be sure slide advance mechanism is convenient to you where you are speaking, or arrange for someone else to advance the slides
- Check the lighting in the room to be sure the slides will be visible to the audience
- Check microphone (whether it is free standing or lavaliere) before beginning- "Can you hear me?"
- Check lighting to podium to be sure you can read

Overhead Transparencies:

- Be sure the type of room and size of crowd are appropriate for the use of overhead equipment
- Be sure the words/graphics are large enough for people to read

- Check to be sure you are situated correctly in the room with the overhead projector, screen, microphone and audience

~

When you are speaking,

- Stand erect and direct your voice toward the audience
- Speak loudly, slowly and distinctly
- Establish eye contact (or appear to do so) with the audience from time to time
- Stay within the allotted presentation time

When you are answering questions,

- Remain friendly, cool-headed and confident
- Answer only the questions asked and do so as succinctly and clearly as possible
- Remember that you do not always have to know everything. You can say "I will have to check that out for you--please see me after the meeting
- Avoid allowing one person to dominate the questions by moving on: “Thank you for your interest. I'll be glad to talk to you about your concerns after the meeting. Right now let's see if anyone else has questions for the group”

~

When you are finished with your presentation,

- Remain long enough to give individuals an opportunity to talk with you
- See to it that arrangements are made for distributing information materials to the group, if requested/appropriate

The Don'ts:

When preparing to give a speech,

- Assume that you can "wing it"-- almost no one can
- Decide you are better "off the cuff"--almost no one is
- Use type that is too small to read with a dim light and margins too narrow for notes

- Leave too little time to practice adequately

~

When you arrive at your engagement,

- Be late
- Forget the group's contact person's name
- Fail to check your equipment

~

When you are speaking,

- Mumble your remarks to the podium
- Speak too loudly into the microphone
- Allow yourself to wander away from your prepared text
- Tell an unprepared anecdote or joke, or make "top of mind" remarks
- Speak longer than time allotted

~

When you are answering questions,

- Become defensive or emotional
- Assume that tough questions are personal
- Answer more than the question itself
- Allow one person to dominate the question period

RECOVERY

Section 4: After the Crisis - Returning to Normal

Communications Guidelines

Approximately one to two weeks after the crisis event is substantially or completely handled, full debriefing of the communications team should occur to:

- Evaluate the short-term impact of the crisis

Crisis Evaluation:

____

____

____

____

____

- Identify possible long-term effects that should be addressed

Long-term effects

Long-Term Effects	How They Will be Addressed

- Critique performance of the team

Team Member	Performance

- Note changes that should be made to deal with future situations

Future Changes:

Recovery Timeline

Remember, you've already filled out this chart in the preparedness stage. Now it's time to make sure all the end goal dates and final recovery tasks are filled out and completed.

Communications Recovery Team Timeline						
	Call-in phone number:		***** Key Dates*****			
Task #	**Task Description**	**Primary Team Lead**	**Target Start**	**Target Complete**	**Actual Complete**	
1	Crisis-specific key messages and updates					
2	Crisis response center set up and management					
3	Spokesperson preparation					
4	Media (social & traditional), email, voicemail monitoring and response					
5	Incoming phone/email logs					
6	Media communications					
7	Board communications					
8	Employee communications					
9	Volunteer communications					
10	Donor communications					
11	Vendor communications					

12	Government official outreach					