

Crisis Communication Strategies

for Effectively Communicating with Stakeholders During a Disaster



Introduction

- Effective crisis communication during a disaster is crucial for stakeholders and organizations.
- It provides timely and accurate information, helping people make informed decisions.
- It maintains stakeholder trust by demonstrating transparency and empathy.
- Communication manages perceptions and protects the organization's reputation.
- It facilitates coordination and collaboration among different parties involved in the crisis response.
- Effective communication minimizes legal and regulatory risks.
- It enhances organizational resilience by learning from the crisis and improving future responses.



Understanding The Nature Of Disasters

These events have significant consequences for stakeholders

- ✓ Safety
- ✓ Well-being
- ✓ Health
- ✓ Economic Impact
- ✓ Infrastructure
- ✓ Displacement
- ✓ Confidence
- ✓ Social Fabric
- ✓ Environmental Impact
- ✓ Long-term Consequences



Disasters can be categorized into natural disasters (e.g., earthquakes, hurricanes), technological emergencies (e.g., chemical spills, power outages), pandemics (e.g., COVID-19), and more.





Identifying Stakeholders

Understanding and addressing these needs and concerns is essential for effective stakeholder engagement during a crisis.

Employees

Concerned about job security and workplace safety.

Shareholders

Focus on profitability and long-term growth.

Media

Require accurate information and transparency.

Suppliers and Partners

Value stable business relationships and timely payments.

Customers

Seek quality, reliability, and customer support.

Local Community

Interested in the organization's impact on the economy, environment, and social well-being.

Government Agencies

Emphasize compliance and public safety.

NGOs

Concerned with environmental sustainability and social responsibility.



Preparing A Crisis Communication Plan

Building a Crisis Communication Team

- **Roles and Responsibilities**
Define team members' roles and responsibilities.
- **Composition and Structure**
Determine the relevant departments and reporting lines.

Communication Protocol

- **Chain of Command**
Establish a clear decision-making hierarchy.
- **Decision-Making Processes**
Define processes for issuing statements, responding to media, and updating stakeholders.
- **Contact Information**
Maintain an updated contact list for team members, stakeholders, and media.

Crafting Key Messages

- ✓ Identify core messages that address stakeholders' concerns and provide relevant information.
- ✓ Tailor messages to specific stakeholder groups, considering their unique needs and perspectives.
- ✓ Ensure messages are clear, concise, and easy to understand.

Establishing Key Messages

Consistency In Messaging

- ✓ Establish consistent messaging across all communication channels (e.g., press releases, social media, website).
- ✓ Provide guidelines to spokespersons and communication team members to ensure consistent delivery of key messages.
- ✓ Regularly review and update messages as the crisis evolves or new information emerges.

Selecting Communication Channels

▶ Customers/Consumers: Social media, websites, email, phone, mobile apps.

▶ Government/Regulatory Agencies: Formal letters/email, government websites/portals, regulatory filings.

▶ Employees/Internal Stakeholders: Email, intranet, internal messaging platforms, meetings/conferences.

▶ Issue press releases and engage with journalists for media communication.

▶ Investors/Shareholders: Investor relations website, shareholder newsletters, annual general meetings.

▶ Consider stakeholder preferences, habits, and accessibility.

▶ Engage customers through social media platforms.

▶ Utilize email for internal communication with employees.

▶ Maintain informative and user-friendly websites for customers.

▶ Media/Journalists: Press releases, media outreach, media events.

Timely and accurate information during a crisis

- ✓ Essential for effective crisis management and informed decision-making.
- ✓ Instills trust and confidence in stakeholders by demonstrating proactive action.
- ✓ Mitigates rumors and speculation, providing reliable information.



Maintaining Open And Transparent Communication

Transparency for building trust

- ✓ Acknowledge challenges openly to demonstrate accountability.
- ✓ Share progress regularly, highlighting milestones and achievements.
- ✓ Communicate the impact of the crisis and mitigation efforts.
- ✓ Address concerns promptly through open dialogue and active listening.



Utilizing Social Media For Crisis Communication



Social Media Platforms

- Leverage platforms like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc., to disseminate timely and accurate information during a crisis.
- Use these platforms to reach a wide audience quickly and efficiently.
- Customize the messaging for each platform to suit the target audience and the nature of the crisis.

Monitoring and Responding

- Monitor social media channels closely to stay informed about public sentiment, concerns, and questions related to the crisis.
- Respond promptly and appropriately to address concerns, provide clarifications, and offer support.
- Engage in active listening by acknowledging feedback and incorporating it into the crisis communication strategy.



Crisis Communication Training

- Regular training sessions on procedures, protocols, and best practices.
- Train employees for quick, confident, and appropriate crisis responses.
- Provide guidance on media interactions, spokesperson roles, and communication channels.

Simulations

- Conduct crisis scenario simulations to test the communication plan.
- Identify strengths, weaknesses, and response coordination.
- Evaluate adaptability and critical decision-making.
- Use simulation outcomes to refine the plan and improve readiness.

Training And Simulations



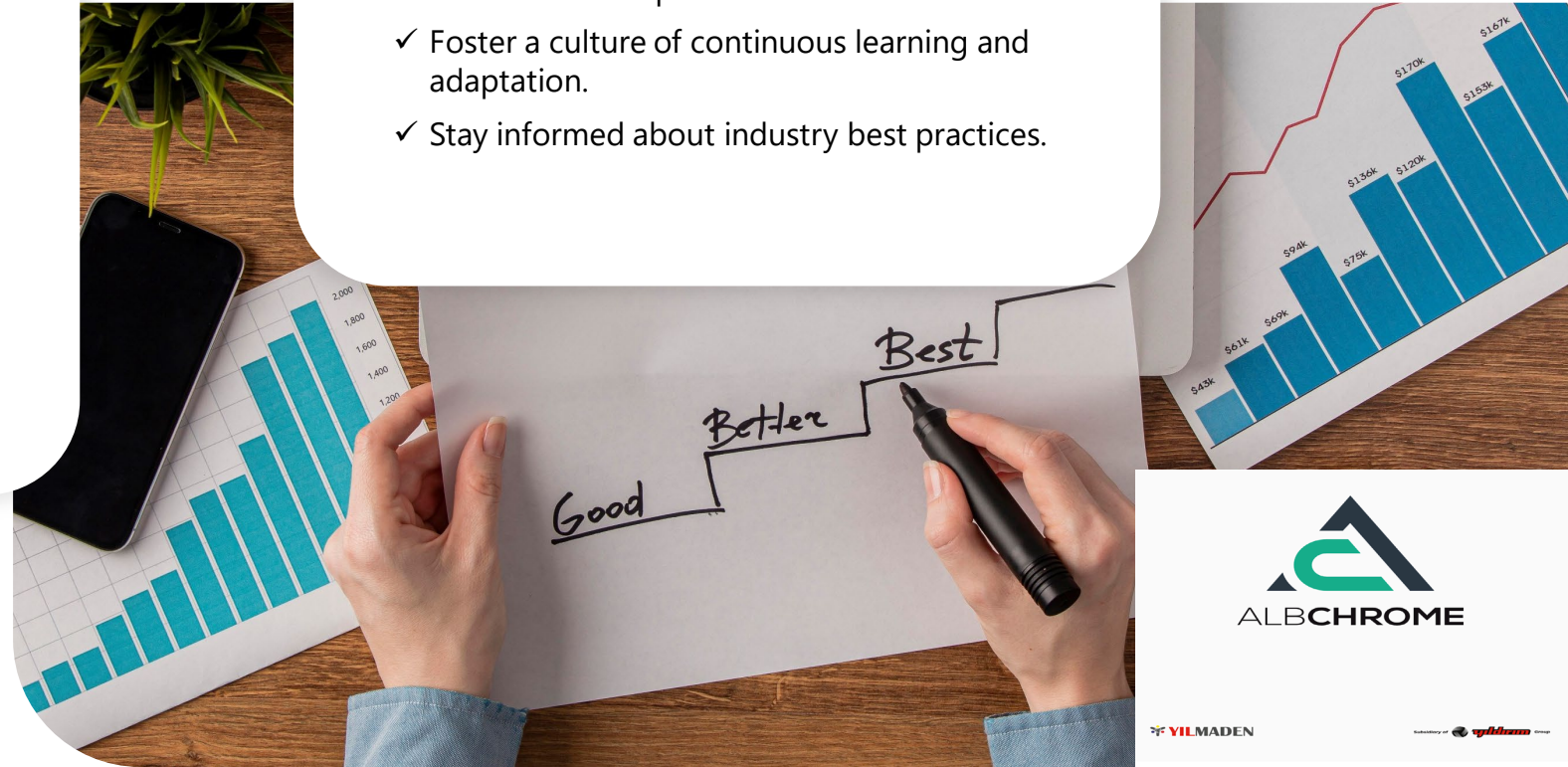
Evaluation And Continuous Improvement

Measuring Effectiveness:

- ✓ Monitor impact through reach, engagement, and sentiment analysis.
- ✓ Gather stakeholder feedback to assess effectiveness.
- ✓ Utilize surveys, focus groups, and social media monitoring for insights.

Continuous Improvement:

- ✓ Use feedback and data to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.
- ✓ Regularly review and update the communication plan.
- ✓ Foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptation.
- ✓ Stay informed about industry best practices.



Case Studies 1

Organization A's Successful Crisis Communication during a Natural Disaster



Underground Conveyor Belt Fire

Mining accident that resulted in the death of 301 miners due to a fire in the coal mine in Soma district of Manisa/Turkey province on 3 May 2014.



The fatal explosion in a coal mine in China

The Benxi colliery disaster in China cost 1,549 lives and is believed to be the worst coal mining disaster ever. The tragedy occurred on 26 April 1942 in the Honkeiko coal mine, located near Benxi in the Liaoning province of China..



Tailings dam failure in Hungary - 2010

The wave of mud flooded streets in Kolontár, where seven people were confirmed dead, and Devecser, where the flow was powerful enough to move cars and vans.

Case Studies 1

Organization A's Successful Crisis Communication during a Natural Disaster

Key Factors

- ✓ Preparedness: Well-established crisis communication plan.
- ✓ Clear and Timely Messaging: Concise, consistent instructions via multiple channels.
- ✓ Multi-channel Approach: Utilized traditional and digital platforms.
- ✓ Collaborative Partnerships: Worked with local authorities and non-profits.
- ✓ Empathy and Emotional Support: Provided counseling resources and support.
- ✓ Transparency and Honesty: Acknowledged challenges and shared updates.

Results

- ✓ Increased Awareness: Reached a large population with safety guidelines.
- ✓ Coordinated Response: Minimized duplication and optimized resource distribution.
- ✓ Trust and Credibility: Build trust with communities and government agencies.
- ✓ Positive Public Perception: Portrayed as a reliable organization.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ Preparedness is crucial.
- ✓ Collaboration and partnerships enhance communication.
- ✓ Empathy fosters trust and support.
- ✓ Transparency and honesty build credibility.

Background: Organization AN effectively communicated during a Category 5 hurricane.



Case Studies 2

Organization B's Effective Stakeholder Engagement during a Technological Emergency



Brazil tailing dam bursts; 200 people missing

The company has agreed to pay out \$107m in collective moral damages and \$186,000 to the relatives of each of the 300 people killed by the disaster.



BP oil spill

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill is an industrial disaster that began on April 20, 2010, in the Gulf of Mexico considered to be the largest marine oil spill in the history of the petroleum industry. The U.S. federal government estimated the total discharge at 4.9 million barrels (210 million US gal; 780,000 m3).



Volkswagen emissions scandal

Volkswagen emissions scandal The Volkswagen emissions scandal, also known as Dieselgate or Emissionsgate, began in September 2015, when the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a notice of violation of the Clean Air Act to German automaker Volkswagen. Volkswagen deployed this software in about 11 million cars worldwide, including 500,000 in the United States, in model years 2009 through 2015.

Background: Organization B engaged stakeholders during a data center outage.

Case Studies 2

Organization B's Effective Stakeholder Engagement during a Technological Emergency

Key Factors

- ✓ Proactive Communication: Promptly communicated the situation and resolution time.
- ✓ Regular Updates: Provided consistent progress and challenge updates.
- ✓ Personalized Support: Dedicated customer support teams offered assistance.
- ✓ Transparency and Honesty: Took responsibility and shared preventive measures.
- ✓ Empathy and Understanding: Listened to concerns, offered apologies, and prioritized support.

Results

- ✓ Mitigated Business Impact: Minimized disruptions through timely updates and support.
- ✓ Trust and Loyalty: Strengthened client loyalty through transparent communication.
- ✓ Positive Reputation: Built a positive industry reputation with commitment and exceptional support.

Lessons Learned

- ✓ Proactive communication manages expectations.
- ✓ Personalized support addresses individual concerns.
- ✓ Transparency and honesty enhance trust.
- ✓ Empathy and understanding build stronger relationships.

Background: Organization B engaged stakeholders during a data center outage.



Key Lessons

Preparedness

Establish a crisis communication plan.

Collaboration

Build strong stakeholder relationships.

Empathy

Address stakeholders' emotions.

Transparency

Share information openly.

Best Practices

Proactive Communication: Keep stakeholders informed promptly.

Regular Updates: Provide consistent progress updates.

Personalized Support: Address individual concerns.

Multi-channel Approach: Use various communication channels.

Transparency: Share accurate information.

Collaboration: Work closely with stakeholders.

Continuous Improvement: Evaluate and enhance communication strategies.

Regular Updates: Provide consistent progress updates.

Lessons Learned and Best Practices



Conclusion

- In conclusion, proactive and strategic crisis communication plays a vital role in maintaining stakeholder trust during challenging situations. The key lessons learned include the importance of preparedness, collaboration, empathy, and transparency. By having a well-established crisis communication plan, building strong relationships with stakeholders, addressing their emotions, and openly sharing information, organizations can effectively engage stakeholders and mitigate the impact of crises on their reputation.
- It is crucial to keep stakeholders informed promptly through regular updates, offer personalized support to address individual concerns, utilize various communication channels for wider reach, and continuously improve communication strategies based on lessons learned. By implementing these best practices, organizations can navigate crises more effectively, build and maintain trust with stakeholders, and emerge with a positive reputation. Proactive and strategic crisis communication is a fundamental aspect of organizational resilience and success in today's dynamic and unpredictable business landscape.

• **Thank You**



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