

GUIDE

(intended as a guide to be adapted based on
the size and needs of an organization)

Issues/Crisis Management and Communication Plan

Why Have An Issues/Crisis Management Plan?

It is an essential part of emergency preparedness and response. A company's success is dependent, in part, upon its reputation. A solid company plan, integrated with its operations, and then tested, understood, and practiced by employees, can save reputations and even lives.

The Plan consists of:

- A Crisis Management Team (CMT)
- A two-step crisis notification and response procedure. These two parts can help streamline the internal notification process so that the CMT can respond quickly and effectively

Definition of A Crisis

A crisis is any unusual event that:

- Interferes with normal operations of a company
- Has the potential to affect the reputation of your company
- Is likely to get worse if not addressed quickly and effectively
- Has attracted or is likely to attract unwanted attention from outsiders, including the media

Developing A Plan

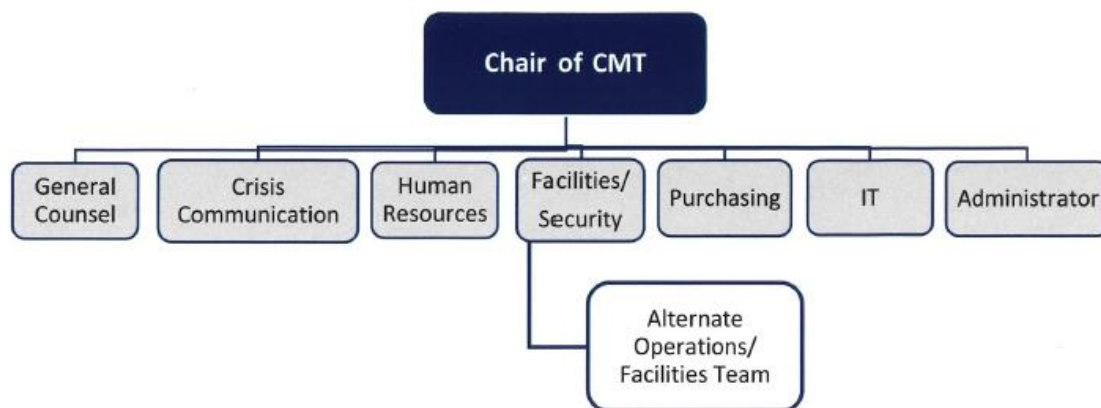
- The Plan should explain what information is to be collected to begin the notification process once an issue or crisis is identified
- The Plan should define a crisis
- The Plan should identify the proper persons to be notified and method of notification
- The Plan should identify the members of the CMT and their respective roles
- The Plan should identify the Crisis Communications Team (CCT) and the roles of its members
- The Plan should be reviewed and updated periodically. After a crisis, a debriefing should be held to make any adjustments

Creating A Crisis Management Team (CMT)

The organizational structure of a crisis team may differ from the day-to-day structure. In some cases, approval and decision-making abilities may not follow the traditional top down organizational structure that a company has in place. Each role within the crisis team is based on the capabilities needed for that role, rather than an individual's position among the leadership. In creating the CMT:

- Plan the role of the team
- Outline roles and responsibilities of team members
- Detail steps to take
- Indicate proper points of contact and procedures to follow
- Identify possible resources

Crisis Management Team Organization Chart



CMT Roles and Job Descriptions

The following job descriptions will help in defining members' roles and responsibilities within their respective crisis teams:

Chair

The role and duties of the Chair of the CMT include:

- Decide if and when to activate the CMT and which members to activate
- Act as leader of the overall crisis response
- Determine which members and subject matter experts (SMEs) should be included on calls and/or convened in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Assign a level to each crisis: Level One, Two or Three
- In collaboration with the CMT, determine a strategic approach to addressing the crisis
- Direct the members of the CMT to mobilize their own team members and assets to address their particular responsibilities
- Hold each member of the team accountable for carrying out the duties of that member's area of responsibility
- Inform and consult with the President/CEO about the situation/incident, provide them with regular updates and enlist them as spokesperson in very serious incidents. This is also the case for other members of leadership who are not designated as members of the CMT
- Act as spokesperson at times, depending on the level of crisis, subject matter, level of response, and ability and availability of other potential spokespersons
- Be the main point of contact for board, government officials (as required/appropriate) and others, as the subject matter and severity of the crisis dictate
- At the appropriate time, declare the crisis to be over and a return to normal operations
- Convene the entire CMT soon after the issue/crisis is over, specifically to debrief and capture lessons learned

General Counsel

This position is activated at the discretion of the CMT Chair. The role and duties of the General Counsel include:

- Gauge the legal risk of each event
- Serve as a major advisor to the Chair and CMT
- Provide "legal privilege" to the communications of the CMT
- Take the lead in determining and executing the legal response strategy in the case of a lawsuit.
- Review all proposed communications produced by the CCT, providing comment, counsel and approval, as needed, to the Chair and CCT.

Chair, Crisis Communication Team (CCT)

The Chair of the CCT serves on the CMT. This person will supervise the CCT team which is responsible for delivering reviewed information to all internal and external stakeholder groups. The CCT Team is activated at the discretion of the CMT Chair.

Human Resources

The director of this division is activated at the discretion of the CMT Chair. As a member of the CMT, this person has responsibility to:

- Ensure that the HR policies of the organization are followed during the crisis response
- Arrange for grief counselors and others to be available to employees and their family members, if needed
- Act as the main point of contact for employees' families
- Collaborate with the HR professionals of clients and contractors
- Provide an appropriate level of information to the CMT about any employees who might be involved in or impacted by the crisis
- Manage a "relief schedule" of team members and their back-ups for an ongoing crisis
- Coordinate meal and rest breaks for team members in the Emergency Operations Center
- Set up an employee inquiry line (if the crisis is substantial and ongoing)
- Track inquiries from employees and provide approved responses (that are in line with what CCT is delivering to outside audiences)

Facilities/Security

The managers of facilities are activated at the discretion of the CMT Chair. These essential managers have critical responsibilities, including to:

- Provide the CMT with information, including facts and diagrams about facility that might be involved in a crisis
- Interface with security contractors and law enforcement in any investigation of injuries or possible criminal acts
- Arrange for additional security, as needed, to protect facilities, patrons and employees
- Be ready to ensure protests remain orderly and don't impact operations or facilities unduly
- Recommend evacuation or shelter in place

Alternate Operations/Facilities Team

These individuals are activated at the discretion of the managers of the facilities. This group is not officially a member of the CMT. However, as key executives are withdrawn from their day-to-day duties to manage the crisis, others must be ready to step in and maintain ongoing operations. This group will be kept informed of the actions of the CMT in bringing the issue/crisis to an end.

Purchasing

The head of Purchasing is activated at the discretion of the CMT Chair. As a member of the CMT, this person has responsibilities to:

- Advise the CMT on availability of funds that might be needed quickly to address immediate needs of the response
- Work with banking and other partners, as necessary, to ensure needed funds are forthcoming
- Advise the CMT on logistics

Information Technology (IT)

This role is activated at the discretion of the CMT Chair. As a member of the CMT, the head of IT has responsibilities to:

- Ensure that whatever communication and related needs for the crisis response are available
- In the event of a data breach:
 - Determine what data was lost
 - Direct the response to the data breach
 - Notify and work with law enforcement and government agencies in the response

Administrator/Recorder

This role is activated at the discretion of the CMT Chair. As a member of the CMT, the Administrator/Recorder is responsible for coordinating logistics and recording the progression of the crisis response. Responsibilities include to:

- Ensure the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is equipped with all necessary materials and equipment, as well as to arrange for food and drink for the CMT
- Interface with IT for CMT support, if necessary
- Provide and/or coordinate additional administrative support, as needed
- Maintain a call log and manage stakeholder and contacts list
- Attend all CMT meetings and maintain running record of decisions, assignments and tasks, as well as notation of when those assignments and tasks are completed
- To attend the wrap-up session called by the CMT Chair and record (and disseminate) lessons learned
- On an ongoing (non-crisis) basis:

- Review crisis plan at least every 3 months and ensure that CMT roles and contact information are up to date (as a plan with an outdated contact list will impede the crisis response)

Government Relations/Key Stakeholder

This role is activated at the discretion of the CMT Chair. The role and duties of this position:

- Take the major responsibility for relations with government officials
- Coordinate communication and keep important stakeholders updated as the crisis response progresses
- Communicate concerns and interests of key stakeholders back to the CMT
- Update CMT on any emerging issues related to government officials
- Coordinate closely with the Crisis Communication Team (CCT) on issues that must be addressed
- Communicate with key organizations that share an interest in the organization

President/CEO

Although they are not officially designated as members of the CMT, the President/CEO will serve as a consultant to the team. In addition, in very serious incidents, they may be called on to serve as spokespersons for the organization.

Other Members of Leadership Team Not Designated as Members of CMT

In addition to the President/CEO, other members of the leadership team—while not officially designated as members of the CMT—may be called in to serve as consultants and/or spokespersons.

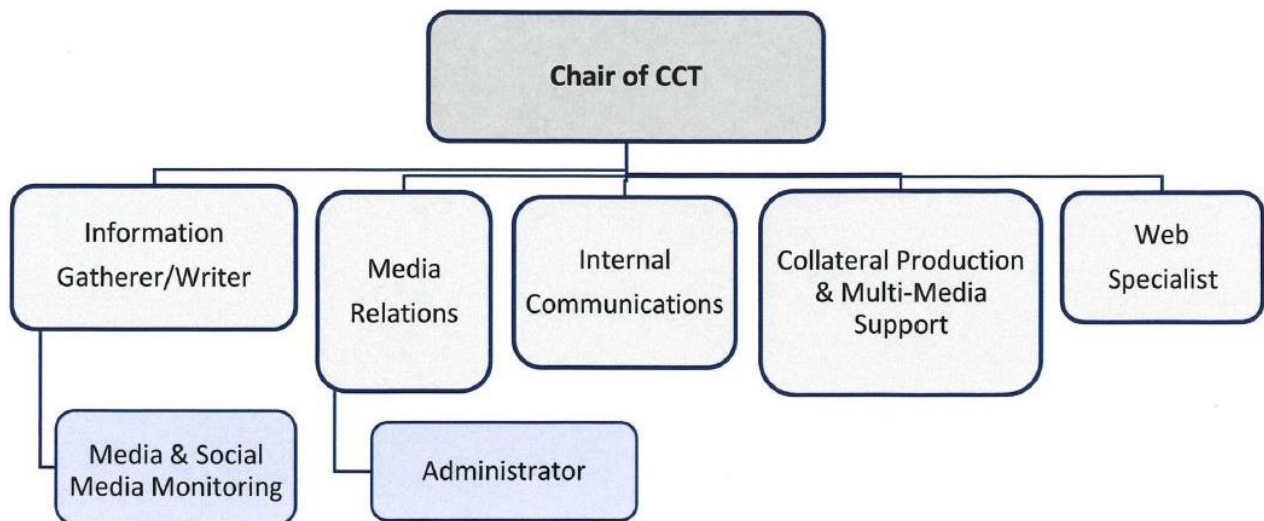
Crisis Communication Team (CCT)

This team is activated at the discretion of the CMT Chair as deemed necessary. The CCT Chair will activate members as required by the situation. The team will:

- Develop and review key messages, talking points, response statements and news releases
- Coordinate approval of messages for all stakeholder groups from the CMT
- Respond to and manage all inquiries from media
- Coordinate dissemination of messages through digital media
- Provide collateral production and multi-media support
- Collaborate with HR on employee communications, and manage communication to all internal stakeholder groups
- Maintain a media call log and coordinate with the CMT Administrator on the overall call log
- Serve as spokesperson for Level Two crises
- In Level Three events, serve as spokesperson, at least in the initial stages
- Coach management spokespersons and manage interview requests

- Forward calls to Human Resources/others, as appropriate
- Gather information about the crisis, what is being done, and perceptions of those outside the organization
- Direct monitoring of traditional and social media and provide regular periodic reports of findings to the CMT
- Stage news conferences and bring in outside resources to extend internal capabilities, as needed

CRISIS COMMUNICATION TEAM ORGANIZATION CHART



CCT Roles and Job Descriptions

The following job descriptions will help in defining members' roles and responsibilities within their respective crisis teams:

Chair of the CCT

The Chair of the CCT serves on the CMT. This person will supervise the CCT Team responsible for delivering reviewed information to all internal and external stakeholder groups. The CCT Chair will activate members as required by the situation.

Information Gatherer /Writer

This individual is responsible for gathering information and assimilating data for use in strategy and materials development. This individual is responsible for timely development of key messages and supporting proof points, and working with the CCT Chair for review and approval. Activated by the CCT Chair, this person:

- Collects, assimilates and delivers information about the incident, the response activities, media coverage, social media conversation and public and stakeholder perceptions related to the incident

- Uses all resources, tools and methods available to gain an accurate understanding of the incident, what is being done to manage the incident and how those outside the incident and response perceive and react to the incident and communication
- Is supported by a Media Monitoring and Social Media Monitoring specialist
- Outsources media/social media monitoring, if needed
- Ensures that the most current information is available to the CMT and to the Collateral Production and Multi-Media Support person (see below)
- Coordinates legal approval of messages for all audiences

Media and Social Media Monitoring Specialist

- Activated by the Chair of the CCT
- Serves the Information Gatherer/Writer by collecting and reviewing media reports from traditional and online editions of traditional media and by collecting and reviewing digital media sites, websites, blogs and community and stakeholder related websites.
- Produces a periodic report on trends, questions, concerns and emerging issues
- Identifies misinformation or rumors
- In doing the above, uses all available news feeds and consolidation tools

Media Relations

This individual is responsible for the development and execution of an approved media strategy and maintaining relationships with the media throughout an incident by providing them approved information. They are responsible for the preparation and availability of spokespersons to the media and will coordinate, as necessary, with the Administrator to ensure security at media events. As necessary, this person will supervise a team of media relations staff, a spokesperson coach and other staff necessary to stage press conferences. Activated by the CCT Chair, this person:

- Responds to media inquiries and serves as HFC spokesperson
- Works with Information Gatherer/Writer and the Media Monitoring Specialist to understand trends, rumors, misinformation and topics that need to be addressed in responses to the media
- Works with Information Gatherer/Writer in the preparation of news releases and other media collateral.
- Arranges logistics for news conferences, interviews
- Conducts many of the media interviews, including potentially at the site of the crisis
- Maintains call log database with Administrator
- Distributes timely information to the media, with the approval of the CCT Chair
- Serves as, or outsources, spokesperson coaching when/if necessary
- May moderate news conferences, as needed

Internal Communications

This individual is responsible for providing employees, clients and contractors with timely, relevant and appropriate information. The Internal Communications person works with the Information Gatherer/Writer to ensure messaging for the employee/contractor audience is consistent with external communication. This person also coordinates communications with Human Resources. This role:

- Is activated by the CCT Chair and/or HR
- Reformats all approved external communication for internal distribution
- Activates and monitors inquiry line for questions from employees
- Logs inquiries from employees and responds with approved answers
- Forwards inquiries to others, such as Human Resources, as is determined to be necessary

Collateral Production and Multi-Media Support

This role is activated by the CCT Chair. This individual is responsible for the formatting and availability to the CMT and CCT of all materials written and oral, and the production of materials in various formats, including news releases, speeches, videos, tweets, and website postings. As necessary, this role will supervise a team including Writer(s), Multi-Media Support and Web Specialist. This individual also is responsible for coordination with the CCT Chair to distribute materials, as necessary, to the appropriate business leads for redistribution. This role:

- Serves the CMT by developing all releasable materials needed to support the communication goals and objectives of the response, as directed by the CCT Chair
- Holds the responsibility for ensuring that only materials approved and authorized by the CCT Chair are publicly released
- Collateral Production and Multi-Media Support
- Maintains an open dialogue with the Information Gatherer/Writer, so that the CCT and CMT can meet the media and public demands for accurate and timely information
- Provides the latest approved communication collaterals to the CMT
- Provides counsel about and production of a variety of visuals: images, video, maps and other communication materials
- Develops needed visuals to help explain and illustrate the various key messages and answers to questions
- Maintains access to a library of existing images, videos, maps and other communication support materials. These materials may be needed for a variety of uses, including crisis communication

Web Specialist

- Activated by the CCT chair
- Maintains up-to-date approved communication on the company website

- Works closely with the Writer and Multi-Media Support specialists to ensure communications are appropriate for dissemination via various digital media outlets, including Twitter and Face book

INITIAL EVALUATION & NOTIFICATION PROCESS

The first few hours of a crisis are the most important. This is when an organization must demonstrate that it is acting responsibly and decisively to resolve the situation. The slower the response, the more time there is for speculation and rumor to grow. When an employee sees something they think may be a crisis:

Step One: Call his/her supervisor/ if the supervisor agrees

Step Two: Place a call to 911, if necessary, then call the company 24-Hour Crisis Hot Line

These two simple steps will ensure that an appropriate response to a crisis can be set in motion extremely quickly, and that the information reaches the chair of the CMT.

ONCE A CRISIS IS IDENTIFIED

Proper Information Is Critical

Accurate information will help the CMT chair to staff the response team in case the situation escalates. It is most important to provide as many facts as possible. However, notification is not to be delayed in order to complete the gathering this information. (When you know when, where and what happened, that's the time to make the call.)

Verify and Confirm Information

The first step is to determine what has happened (what, when, who, how, why), by coordinating at the site of the incident and immediately identifying as many facts as possible. When collecting the data consider the following:

- Do you have all the facts?
- What other information do you need to put the event into perspective?
- Has the situation been confirmed?
- Was your information and source(s) credible?
- Is information consistent from several sources?

Assess the Level of Crisis

Each crisis is unique, but there is an opportunity to become familiar with a variety of scenarios so that a potential crisis can be quickly recognized and addressed. The organization should identify different levels of crisis that could adversely impact operations, financial stability and reputation. The characteristics of a crisis will depend on the organization size and scope.

Level One (Low Risk)

Characteristics:

- This crisis is of a minor nature that can be handled quickly without drawing attention
- No or minimal impact on people or operations
- Minimal likelihood of awareness by public or key external stakeholder groups
- Little potential for mention in either traditional or social media
- No harm to reputation if the crisis is addressed quickly and appropriately

Immediate Actions:

- This level of incident should be reported to the head of the CMT
- Monitoring for potential escalation is recommended, even though escalation is unlikely

Examples:

- Temporary power outage of water leak
- Overheated lighting catches fire; staff members on hand quickly extinguish the fire
- A patron falls on an escalator, suffers an injury and requires first aid

Level Two (Moderate Risk)

Characteristics:

- Minor impact on a number of stakeholders
- Longer-term or more pronounced interruption of operations
- Some limited risk to reputation
- Limited mention on social media or traditional media
- Limited awareness of incident by stakeholders, including board and city officials

Examples:

- Water outage for several hours. Guests are provided alternative source of water
- AC stops working night before big event. Alternate means of cooling is arranged before event starts

Immediate Actions:

- CMT head should be alerted and given information known at the time
- CMT head should alert CCT and other appropriate members of the team to prepare to respond in case the crisis worsens
- CCT will develop a statement to be used in response to a direct inquiry from either media or stakeholders
- Monitor both the situation and traditional and social media
- CMT and CCT members remain on stand-by
- Upper management should be informed
- A spokesperson should be assigned and prepared, if needed, for responses

Level Three (High Risk/ Crisis Mode)

Characteristics:

- Major interruption of or threat to operations
- Serious impact on employees, contractors or guests; include injuries or death
- Potential for significant, long-lasting, negative coverage by traditional and social media
- Serious risk of lasting damage to reputation
- Potential for the situation to worsen or for more damaging information to come to light

Examples:

- Workplace violence, hurricane, credible bomb threat
- Fire, flood, mechanical malfunction that results in injuries or deaths—or the accusation that such events led to such—as a result of action or inaction
- Major loss or breach of data
- High-profile lawsuit against organization or top management
- Loss of facility
- Major physical protest of facility, actions or policies
- Accusations of management wrongdoing from politicians/government officials, client groups, related organizations or others

Immediate Actions:

- Chair of CMT should activate crisis plan and convene some or all members of CMT in Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
- Head of CMT or designate should inform top management, board chair, client groups, and key members of government
- In collaboration with the CMT group, CMT head will evaluate data, form a strategy, and assign tasks for members of the team to start addressing the issue. Next meeting of the CMT is set
- CCT is activated
- Holding statement and tweet are released
- CCT develops talking points, based on information known at the time
- Spokespersons are prepped to speak with media, along with subject matter experts, as appropriate to the crisis
- All statements and news releases are shared with internal audiences at the same time as they are posted on the website/dark site and released to the media and other key stakeholders

LOW RISK	Level 1	<p>This crisis is of a minor nature that can be handled quickly without drawing attention</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary power outage from water leak • Overheated lighting catches fire; staff members on hand quickly extinguish the fire • A patron falls from an escalator, suffers an injury and requires first aid
MODERATE RISK	Level 2	<p>Limited awareness of incident by stakeholders, including board and city officials</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water outage for several hours. Guests are provided alternative source of water • AC stops working night before big event. Alternate means of cooling is arranged before event starts
HIGH RISK / CRISIS MODE	Level 3	<p>Serious impact on employees, contractors or guests; includes injuries or death</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace violence, mass shooting, hurricane, credible bomb threat • Fire, flood, mechanical malfunction that results in injuries or deaths – or the accusation that these events led to such – as a result of action or inaction • Major loss or breach of data • High-profile lawsuit against organization or top management • Loss of facility • Major physical protest of facility, actions or policies • Accusations of management wrongdoing from politicians/government officials, client groups, related organizations or others

Communication Management During A Crisis (Managed By The CCT Chair)

Internal Communication Updates

- Schedule regular internal communication updates
- Schedule regular updates with Public Affairs.
- Identify key audiences.
- Start crisis inquiry log from public and/or media.
- Select and/or assign spokesperson(s) (site and/or corporate)

Identifying Stakeholders

There are many potential stakeholders who will want information during and following a crisis situation. An essential part of communicating effectively during a crisis is identifying who is likely to be impacted and what their concerns might be. Potential stakeholders in a crisis situation could include:

- Visitors and patrons
- Client groups or tenants
- Board members
- Government officials
- Interested groups, such as Discovery Green management, Downtown Management District
- Employees and their families
- Contractors and suppliers
- News media
- General public

Identifying Appropriate Spokespersons

All early communications likely will be by statement, because few facts may be confirmed in the beginning of a crisis. However, may want to identify a spokesperson and back-up at this stage, plus subject matter experts, if needed. Interviews will come later, if the crisis is serious.

Develop Response(s)

Once the crisis level has been determined and factual information to be communicated has been confirmed, it is time to begin planning a response strategy for communicating critical information and for responding to potential questions for each audience. During this step, the Crisis Communications Team should:

- Develop a script for conveying key information points.
- Develop or refer to a list of questions that could be asked by a variety of audiences (families, media, partner, organizations) about the crisis.

- Modify pre-scripted messages or develop new messages.
- Be prepared to address the company's or the operation's record for the relevant crisis situation
- Determine how the company will manage inquiries regarding a CEO's or other senior management's activities that are unrelated to the crisis situation, e.g., political activities.
- Identify the best methods for delivery of key messages.
- Monitor crisis and update messages based on the crisis

Approval by CMT

Once messages are developed for each potential audience, all messages that will be distributed internally to employees and externally to the public, shareholders, the media, etc., must be approved by the following individuals:

- Crisis Communication Management leader
- Legal Counsel

Release

Messages can be released through a variety of means and messengers and at various time frames, depending on the crisis. In crisis levels 3 or 4, the main statement or overarching message should come from the CEO and, if deemed appropriate, include a message of empathy and caring.

Monitor

- Media Monitoring
- During a crisis, it is essential that any media coverage of the company and the crisis be captured and disseminated to appropriate parties as soon as possible.
- Standard media monitoring and reporting that occur on a regularly scheduled basis should be changed to allow for immediate notification of the CMT Chair and then other top management. If broadcast monitoring is set up on an ad hoc basis, it should be changed to ensure capture of any coverage/breaking news
- Any new key words that are relevant to the crisis should be added to the search criteria for media monitoring. A record should be kept of all media coverage. Social media channels where the crisis might be discussed should also be monitored. In an ongoing, serious crisis, a synopsis of media reports, including weighted monitoring of social media mentions, should be compiled and delivered to management at least once a day.

Contacts

- Stakeholders
- Media contacts (radio, TV, print)
- Other

Company Policy/Protocol for Employees

- Establish known procedures/protocols for employees who may be contacted by the media or stakeholders
- Provide training for employees

Summary

In summary, the above Crisis Management Plan is crafted to respond to any crisis efficiently and expeditiously. This plan outlines a dependable process of rapid internal communication about a crisis to the Crisis Management Team. The Two-Step plan, when reinforced with periodic staff drills, will ensure that your organization speaks with one consistent voice, and manages the response to the crisis effectively.