

ISSUES MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

Issues arise quickly, and the best way to ensure they don't escalate is to have a clear plan of action. This 10-step checklist is designed to guide you through the issues management process.

- ☐ **Identify the issue and get ready for action**
 - Assemble your issues management and crisis communications materials
 - Gather all available information about the issue
- ☐ **Monitor your media**
 - Create Google alerts and ensure your existing searches are up to date with essential keywords
 - Check social for tone, reach and engagement around the issue
- ☐ **Alert the team and provide information**
 - Make sure the chain of command and communication is clear—who are your team leads?
 - Decide if your team needs to change or pause any activities, operations or scheduled communications
- ☐ **Develop your messaging**
 - Develop and practice your internal, leadership, customer and media talking points
 - Establish a spokesperson and a source of truth where you can direct traffic to (i.e. website)
- ☐ **Prepare your deliverable (as necessary)**
 - Prepare a press release
 - Prepare social media posts
 - Prepare for a press conference
- ☐ **Review with your team/stakeholders**
 - Report relevant information to executives and decision makers
 - Consult with board members/executives before sending out any external communications
- ☐ **Deliver the deliverables**
 - Send out press releases and social media posts (if applicable)
 - Ensure your spokesperson has a clear voice throughout your deliverables
- ☐ **Monitor for additional coverage and responses**
 - Look closely at the social conversations happening
 - Check for spikes in media coverage
 - Respond when and where appropriate
- ☐ **Reassess the situation**
 - You will know if the issue has been contained if you hear your “voice” reflected in the media coverage
 - If not, consider reaching out to journalists and/or key stakeholders to keep your key messages relevant
- ☐ **Perform a postmortem**
 - Analyze where you handled the issue effectively and where there was room for improvement
 - Update your issues management plan based on your lessons learned