



When Trouble Strikes

A SMALL BUSINESS CRISIS PLANNER

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Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Why You Need to Plan Now!	2
The Four Stages of a Crisis	4
Crunching the Numbers.....	6
Step 1: Assess the Possible Impact.....	6
Step 2: Assess the Probability.....	10
Step 3: Putting It All Together.....	10
Step 4: Plotting the Results.....	11
Step 5: Rinse & Repeat	14
Developing an Effective Crisis Plan	15
Crisis Plan Components	16
Crisis Response Modules	19
Decision Trees.....	21
Resuming Operations.....	22
Summary	25
Appendix A.....	26
Sample Crisis Communication Plan	26
Appendix B.....	54
Crisis Impact Value Rating Sheet	54
Appendix C.....	55
CIV Plotting Grid.....	55
Appendix D.....	56
Working With The Media in A Crisis	56
Appendix E.....	60
Business Continuity Checklist.....	60

Introduction

When it comes to facing a crisis in your business, you need to remember that it's a matter of when, not if. A crisis can strike any time, from the "big one" that geologists say will hit us one day in the Pacific Northwest to something as simple as a disgruntled employee who is skimming away all your profits, a dollar at a time. In between these two extremes are literally dozens of events that can impact your business at any moment. Some will be mere bumps in the road. Others can shake your business to its very core. Still others can be so bad that you'll end up closing your doors – for good.

The good news is, you can reduce the chance a crisis will occur or reduce its impact with a little planning and some practice. And that is the goal of this online guide, to teach you how to identify potential crises, put measures in place to either prevent them or at least minimize their impact and move safely to the other side where you can return to normal, or at the very least, a new normal.

Rolling the Dice is Dangerous.

Crisis management isn't rocket science, but it is a science in many respects. It is also something of an art, largely because no two events are alike. By understanding the process, however, you can follow proven steps to manage any crisis from start to finish with confidence. What's more, you can create a very simple crisis plan for your business that allows you to significantly reduce the guesswork, providing clarity even when all hell is breaking loose around you.

The old adage, "don't put off to tomorrow what you can do today" seems to have been created specifically for the crisis world. The simple truth is, a disaster could strike today, tomorrow or next week. Sure, you can roll the dice and hope one won't strike for years or even decades, but is all the sweat and hard work you've put into your business really worth a lucky roll?

It's Not a Matter of If, but When.

True, a crisis may not strike for years, lulling you into a false sense of security. But the truth is, a crisis in your business can strike at any time, even if it's as simple as an employee robbing you blind or the Russian Mafioso hacking into your data and holding it for ransom. It can happen to the best of us. Just ask the folks at Target, Home Depot or UPS who have all faced a serious crisis in recent years.

The recent news cycles alone should convince you that it's time to do some groundwork. Record heat, 100-year floods and devastating tornados are making headlines across the country and the world, and we won't even mention things like melting ice caps and global warming which will have long-term, unexpected effects on coastal businesses and agriculture.

Yes, a well-conceived crisis plan does take time and effort. But the numbers are hard to argue with. The hard and soft dollar cost of planning and preparing is a drop in the bucket compared to a major crisis striking your company, testing your ability to weather a given crisis and come out on the other side relatively unscathed.

Why You Need to Plan Now!

Companies never expect to have a disaster play out right before their very eyes. Certainly, BP never expected the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, which unleashed 4.9 million barrels into the waters and onto the beaches of the Gulf of Mexico. Barilla Pasta never expected its CEO's remarks on an Italian radio show about homosexuals to cause sales to plummet half a world away in the United States, and it probably never dawned on TV chef Paula Deen that some racial slurs uttered years ago would shake her multi-million empire to its very core.

While none of these companies or people could have seen the specific crisis coming, each could have prepared a response to it and every other possible crisis that could occur, if they only took the time and effort to forge a workable crisis plan and rehearse it periodically.

As part of your plan, you should –

- Identify every potential crisis that could affect you, no matter how remote it may seem.
- Determine what can be done to minimize the risks of it happening in the first place, or if it were to happen, minimize the damage it could do.
- Create a business continuity plan that you can follow in times of crisis to guide you through the process.
- Test the plan at least annually and make any changes to it based on your drills, remembering to keep responses flexible since no two crises are every alike.

A carefully crafted, comprehensive crisis plan will help you know what to do next in a crisis. Think of crisis planning in the same way you would firefighting. With a fire, you do everything in your power to keep it from breaking out in the first place. If it does break out, at least you know where the fire

extinguishers are. It's nearly impossible to fight a fire while you're still trying to figure out how to approach it. If you try, you'll more than likely get burned.

Here are just a few events that can interrupt your operations or even put you out of business:

- **Natural disasters** – These are the most well-known crises, including earthquakes, tornados, hurricanes, landslides, etc. Natural disasters can also include flooding caused by burst water pipes or a collapsed roof that couldn't hold any more water in a storm. In one Gallup poll, 30% of businesses surveyed reported that they had been closed 24 hours or longer in the last three years because of a natural disaster.
- **Theft or vandalism** – Theft can be monetary, but it can also be the loss or disabling of data or intellectual property.
- **Fire** – Fire can be caused by a short in your building's wiring, arson, a power line knocked down during a windstorm, or a tool or appliance left on.
- **IT failure** – This can include computer viruses, hacking, system failures or even a seized hard drive you never bothered to back up. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 93% of businesses that suffer significant data loss go out of business within five years.
- **Restricted access to your place of business** – This can happen when there's a gas leak or an on-site fatality. How will you operate your business remotely during an event that restricts access to your location?
- **Loss or illness of key staff** – This can include the unexpected death of the company's founder in a car accident or a senior management team member who is incapacitated by a stroke or serious illness.

- **Outbreak of disease or infection** – The food industry regularly handles salmonella or e.coli outbreaks, but this can also include an employee who was diagnosed with hepatitis or the measles.
- **Terrorist attack** – Yes, this can happen to you. Remember the Oklahoma City bombing, or 9/11? Even if you aren't the direct target, your business can be affected, either by collateral damage or lack of access to your facility in the aftermath.
- **Supplier or customer crisis** – What events could keep a supplier from providing products or supplies to you? What happens if your customer or client can't get to your place of business to buy your products or services, or couldn't call you because the phones were dead? And how would you handle a product recall, even a recall of a product you only sell, not manufacture?
- **Disparaging media coverage** – An article doesn't have to be true to damage your business. What would you do if you were blasted in the press or a letter to the editor? Should you respond? And if so, how should you respond? And how do you handle the spread of negative or malicious information in the age of social media and 24-hour news cycles?

A Word to Small Businesses and Startups...

You may be reading this and think to yourself, "But I'm just a one-person operation working out of my house or have just a handful of employees who work part-time for me. Why would I need to do all this work?"

The simple answer is, because you've put a lot of effort, money, time and resources into creating and building your business. All those months, even years of work can be swept away in a single, unexpected moment. Creating a crisis plan, even a simple one, will guide you through the tough times so that you can emerge from a crisis, no matter how large or small, still intact. You don't have to go crazy in creating a plan or even do a drill.

But you do want to know where those fire extinguishers are, from having duplicate copies of insurance, incorporation documents and account numbers stored safely away from your place of business to knowing how to contact your employees in a crisis to let them know when and if they can return to work.

What would be the point of starting a business if you don't plan to protect it, and more important, keep it going come hell or high water?

The Four Stages of a Crisis

A crisis has up to four distinct phases. The goal of crisis planning is to move as quickly from the pre-crisis stage to the post-crisis stage. The ideal response would be to eliminate Stage 2 and 3 below with proper planning and responses.

Stage 1: Prodromal (Pre-Crisis)

This is the warning stage. The event hasn't happened yet and you may have not even recognized that it could happen. This is the time when you want to assess the impact an actual crisis could have on your company, employees, customers, suppliers, operations and bottom line.

Stage 2: Acute (Crisis)

This is the crisis itself. There's no turning back now. You will lose some ground, events will occur and you may experience some damage. Ignoring the situation is not an option. The key is to control what you can as much as you can so you can move the situation to the next stage as quickly as possible. The acute stage is the shortest of the four phases.

Stage 3: Chronic (Clean-Up)

This is sometimes referred to as the clean-up phase. This is either a time to breathe a sigh of relief because you handled things well or fight your way through upheaval, financial stress, management shake-ups, the loss of customers and at its worse, bankruptcy or the loss of your business. This period can last indefinitely if you failed to do proper planning or failed to respond properly.

Stage 4: Crisis Resolution (Post-Crisis)

This is the turning point where you can turn a challenge into an opportunity. Again, in crisis planning the goal is to go from the first stage – the stage where a crisis could occur – to this stage where a full-blown crisis never occurred or was handled quickly and efficiently because you did your due diligence when it comes to planning.

Crisis Intervention 101

Any crisis falls into four distinct ranges:

- Red Range – These events have a high probability of occurring and have a major impact on your business.
- Yellow Range – These events have a major impact on your business but a lower probability of occurring.
- Blue Range – These events have less impact on your business but a higher probability of occurring.
- Green Range – These events have a low impact and aren't very likely to occur.

Those crises that fall in the Red Range are the ones you need to focus on most, followed by those in the Yellow Range. Those in the Blue and Green ranges don't warrant as much attention as they won't adversely affect your business in the long run even if they do happen. It can be tempting to work on the Blues and Greens as they take less time and effort to solve, but it may come at the expense of time and resources you could have been using to focus on the crises that will have a serious impact on your business and its operations.

If you do nothing else, try to either reduce the probability a Red Range event will occur or take the steps necessary to reduce its impact on your business.

How do you know which crises belong in which color grouping? Start by thinking up every possible scenario your business can face. No need to rank it at this stage. Focus on creating as complete a list as possible.

Here are just a few to get you started:

- Bomb threat
- Civil disturbance
- Computer hacking
- Consumer boycott
- Earthquake
- Embezzlement
- Fire
- Flood
- Lawsuit
- Loss of a senior partner
- Loss of data
- Pandemic
- Power failure
- Robbery
- Shoplifting
- Strike
- Unfavorable media coverage

The possibilities are virtually endless, of course, and many will be unique to your business and its location. Many crises are industry or business specific, so think long and hard about every possibility, no matter how remote it may seem, including crises that other businesses or competitors have experienced. To save time, don't bother factoring in things like a zombie apocalypse or alien invasion.

Brainstorm all the possibilities. Feel free to engage others in the exercise. Once you have your list, you need to rank each crisis according to how likely it is to occur and what impact it may have on your operations.

Next, we will go through the process step by step.

Crunching the Numbers

STEP 1: ASSESS THE POSSIBLE IMPACT

Look at your list of possible events. For each, answer these five questions, ranking each potential crisis on a scale from 1 (Least Impact) to 10 (Most Impact). Don't worry about the chance of it occurring. We'll get to that in a minute.

1. If the crisis runs the risk of escalating in intensity, how intense might it get and how quickly?
2. To what extent will your crisis fall under someone else's watchful eye, such as the news media, the FBI or a government regulatory agency?
3. To what extent will the crisis interfere with the normal operations of your business?

4. Is your internal/external public image at risk?
5. To what extent would your company's bottom line be damaged?

Here's an example of how this ranking process works.

Let's say that you run a convenience store. Rank each answer on a scale from 1 to 10 on your Crisis Impact Value Rating Sheet (a sample follows).

A possible response could look like this:

Event	1	2	3	4	5	Average
1. Robbery	8	9	8	2	3	6.0

Here's how we got these answers.

1. Obviously, a robbery will escalate very quickly, so let's say an 8 for question #1.
2. Whether it occurs during the attempt or after a successful robbery, the police or another law enforcement agency will almost assuredly get involved, so #2 is a 9.
3. It will shut your business down for part of the day, even longer if there is damage, an injury or a fatality, so an 8 for question #3.
4. Will your image be hurt? Probably not since you're the victim. So #4 would rate a 2.
5. Any financial impact would be negligible, especially if you're insured or the money or items are recovered. So let's rate #5 a 3.

Divide the total by five (the total number of questions) and you'll end up with a 6.0 Crisis Impact Value for this particular scenario.

Now, let's look at the second part of the equation, the probability this scenario will occur. If you do some statistical research, you'll find that there is a 6% chance that any convenience store will be robbed at any particular point. That is the nationwide average.

But let's say that you already know that your store has been robbed twice in the last five years and it's in a tough neighborhood that has a high crime rate overall. While the statistical chance is only 6% nationally, experience tells you it will be higher in your locale. You choose to give it a 20% chance. This means that while a robbery would have a medium impact on your business, there is only a one in five chance that it will happen at any particular point in time.

The final ranking for this scenario then would be 6.0/20 – a 6.0 average for the impact it would have on your business and a 20% chance of it occurring.

Though the chance of it happening is low, you can still do something to reduce the impact of a robbery if you wish. For instance, you could install another security camera or two, keep less cash on hand, add more lighting in the parking lot – the list goes on.

But before you call a security company or electrician, think more about the crisis itself. Is the potential impact worth the cost? How much will it cost you to add these extra security features? Is it substantially more than it would cost to do nothing? Conversely, how would the numbers change if you arm your employees and encourage them to be proactive rather than reactive? Is that worth the money you'd lose?

As you run the numbers, remember that there are usually two levels of cost. There are hard costs and soft costs. Hard costs are the actual dollars a crisis costs you, which can include preventative measures or losses in income caused by the situation.

In contrast, soft costs are the things you can't always readily see: decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, workers' compensation claims, increased turnover, erosion of community support, bad publicity, etc.

Depending on the crisis at hand, the cost of intervention may appear to equal the hard costs of a possible loss. But the soft dollar losses can create a draining effect on your business as you continue to lose revenue long after the initial crisis has passed, often without noticing it until it's too late.

Typically, the more attention your crisis receives in the news, the more likely you will experience a cost in soft dollars. This soft dollar loss can occur over weeks, months or even years. You want to go through this process and analyze hard and soft dollar costs for each crisis you have identified.

Here's a sample worksheet so you can see how a completed analysis looks. The identified crises are those of a midsized retailer, but you'll get the idea of how it all works.

Crisis Impact Value Rating Sheet

Answer these five key questions, ranking the impact of each between 1 (Least) to 10 (Most):

1. If crisis runs risk of escalating in intensity, how intense might it get and how quickly?
2. To what extent would your crisis fall under someone's watchful eye, such as the news media or government regulatory agency?
3. To what extent will crisis interfere with normal operations of your business?
4. Is your internal/external public image at risk?
5. To what extent would your company's bottom line be damaged?

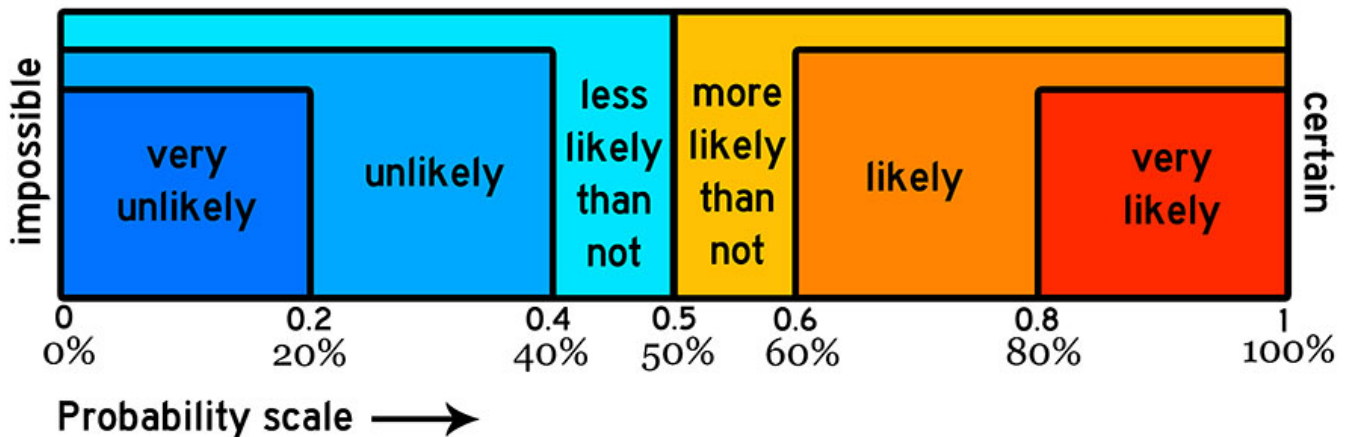
Downloadable versions of these templates are available at: <http://bit.ly/disaster-templates>

EVENT	1	2	3	4	5	Average
1. Acquisition of Another Company	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Arson: Store/Office	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. - Distribution Center	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. - Corp. HQ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. - Employee Originated	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Bomb Threat: Store/Office	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. - Distribution Center	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. - Corp. HQ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9. - Employee Originated	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. Boycott, Consumer	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. Civil Disturbance	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. Computer Hacking	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
13. Data Breach	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. Earthquake, Distribution Center	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. Earthquake, Corp. HQ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
16. Embezzlement/Fraud	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
17. Fire/Explosion, Store/Office/HQ	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

STEP 2: ASSESS THE PROBABILITY

What is the likelihood of the event occurring? Is it an almost certainty, a once in a blue moon chance, or somewhere in the middle? Assign a numerical value to the probability as a percentage on a scale from 0% (no chance at all) to 100% (absolute certainty).

It's O.K. to guess at this point, but if you do, err on the side of greater probability, not less. You can always adjust the numbers later, but it's easy to minimize the chance something will happen because we like the comfort of best-case scenarios.



STEP 3: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

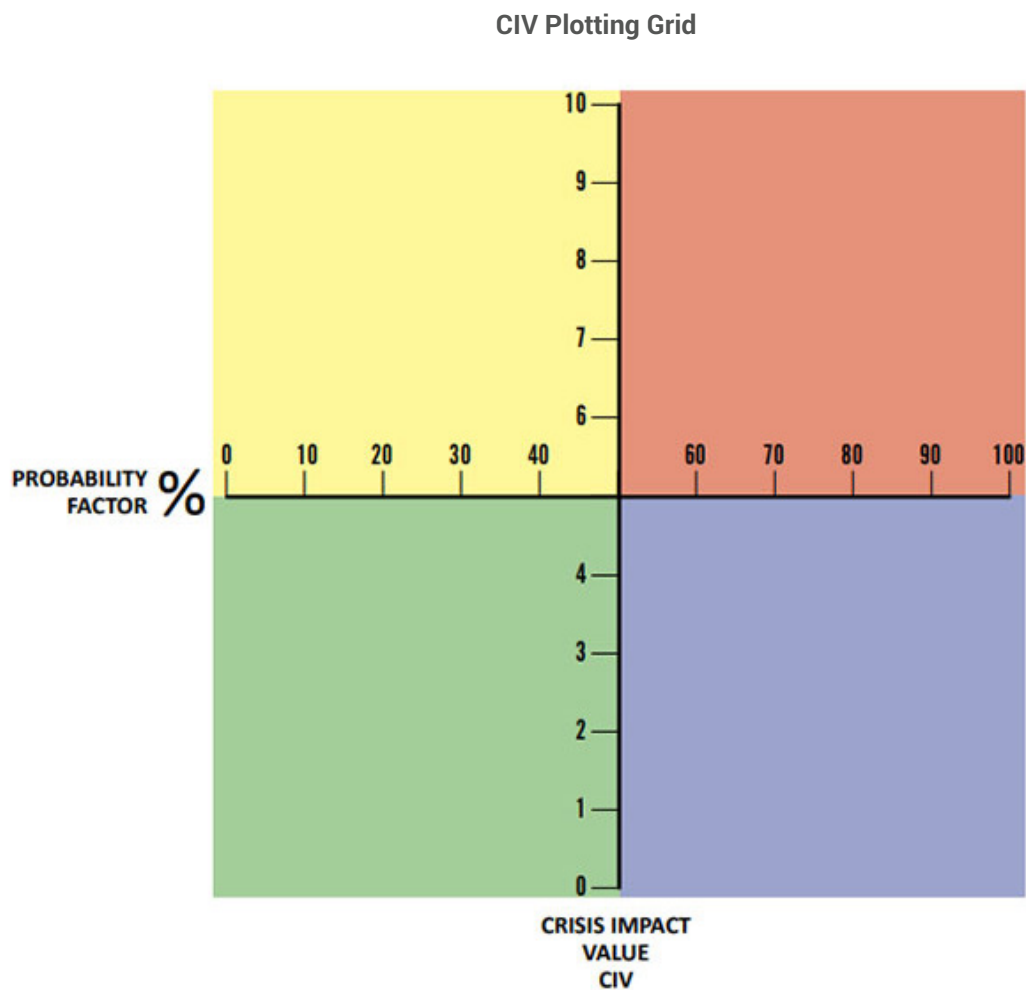
Each crisis should now have an average Possible Impact between 1 and 10 and a Probability between 0 and 100%.

Therefore, any resulting crisis impact can be expressed in the following terms: Impact/Probability. For example, a high impact/high probability event may be scored as 8.2/65, 7.3/80, etc., with the impact expressed first, followed by the probability.

Do this for every conceivable event you can think of, creating a worksheet similar to the downloadable one here. Try to be as objective as possible, even though some of your answers may be at best, guesstimates. If you try to artificially minimize the impact or probability because it will be difficult to deal with, you're only cheating yourself in the long run. You can find template versions of the charts and graphs here.

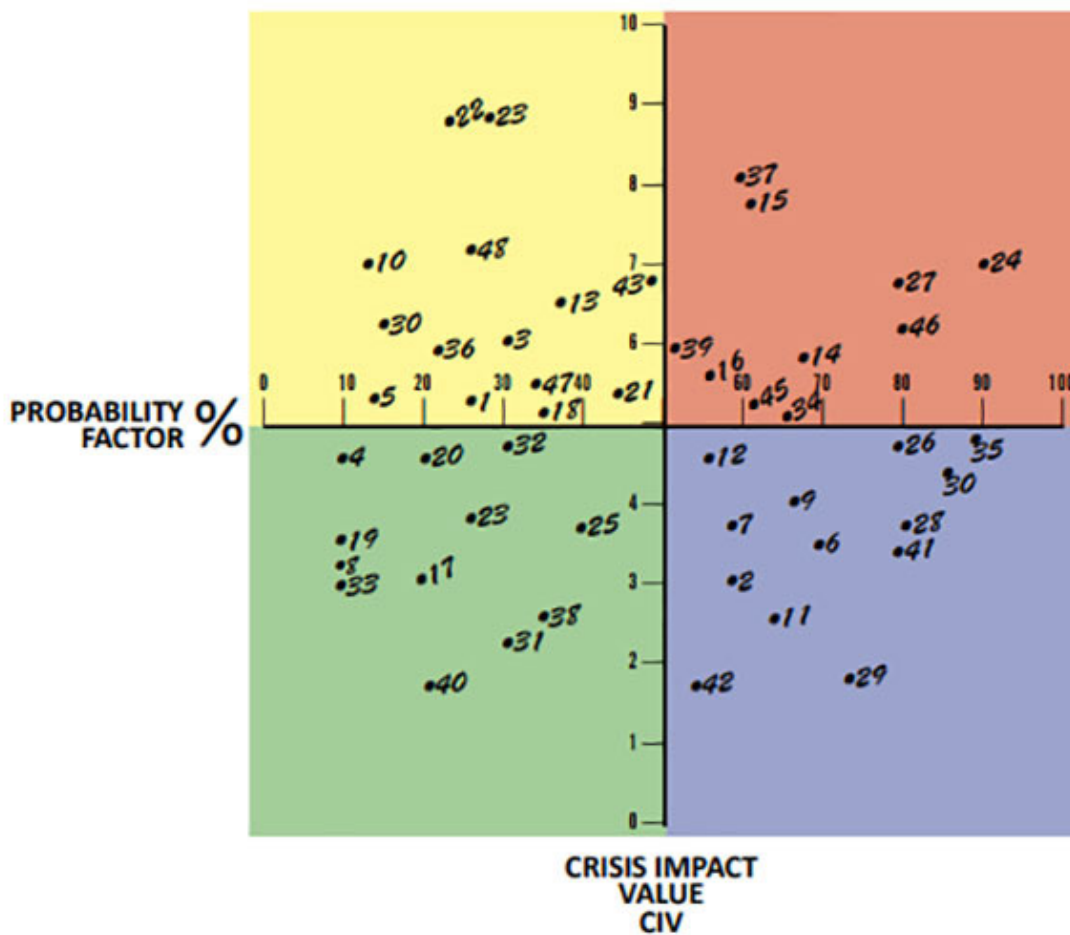
STEP 4: PLOTTING THE RESULTS

O.K. Every possible scenario has been evaluated and had its Impact/Probability score assigned. Now it's time to assign it a spot on a grid. Plot out all the events, using their corresponding numbers in the worksheet as the marker on the grid. The vertical scale shows the Impact Value (0 to 10) and the horizontal scale represents the Probability (0 to 100%).



Every event will end up plotted into one of the four quarters on the grid: Red, Yellow, Blue and Green according to their Probability and Impact. The Red Zone is the upper right quadrant, the Yellow Zone is the upper left quadrant, the Blue Zone goes on the lower right quadrant and the Green Zone goes on the lower left.

Plot all your events according to the crisis impact data (Impact/Probability) on the grid and when you're all done, it should look something like this:



Now that you have them all plotted, you can rank them from the event that has the highest Impact and highest Probability (those in the Red Range) to scenarios that rank low in Impact and low in Probability (the Green Range).

Remember, you want to focus on events in the Red Range first, then the Yellow. If you whip through those and feel comfortable, tackle the Blues.

Based on our sample plotting, here are the Red Range events that require near-term attention:

RED RANGE (High Impact/High Probability)

Crisis #	Crisis Description	Impact/Probability
24	Reorganization	7.0/90
14	Data Breach	5.8/68
27	Layoffs	6.8/79
37	Sale of Company	8.2/60
46	Unfavorable Media Story	6.4/80
34	Robbery	5.2/66
45	Unsubstantiated Media Story	5.2/61
16	Embezzlement/Fraud	5.6/56
15	Data Failure	7.8/62
29	Senior Partner/Board Scandal	6.0/52

Your goal is to reduce the Impact or the Probability of each scored event so that you can move these them into the Blue or Green Range.

Let’s look at data failure for starters. How would you reduce the Impact or Probability of a data failure?

To reduce the Probability, you could make sure all your data is backed up regularly. This would move the crisis to the Yellow Range because it would be less likely that data would be lost if there were a hardware failure. That’s a good start, but you’re still going to have to address the Yellow Range threats somewhere down the road. It would be far wiser to move them straight to Blue or Green. For example, you can

choose to back up the data on a schedule and store a backup of it off-site somewhere or put it in the cloud. No matter what the crisis, you’ll always have a backed up copy of your important data.

Layoffs or reorganizations are part of the business cycle. They can even be considered inevitable. While you may not be able to execute a no-layoff policy to reduce the Probability, you can reduce the Impact by devising an internal communication plan that keeps employees informed, handles staff reductions or reorganizations with honesty, integrity and transparency, and creates a system for reducing staff with dignity.

STEP 5: RINSE & REPEAT

It may be tempting to go through this process once and think you have everything under control. But the Probability and Impact of any particular crisis can change over time and new ones may arise. You need to revisit your plan regularly to make sure that there aren't any new scenarios that could cripple your business and reassess the Impact and Probability of every event since they can change over time. You may also decide some scenarios are no longer relevant. Feel free to remove them as you update the list.

While you're sprucing up your plan, be sure to do a little housekeeping and inspect any of the measures you've put in place to reduce the Impact or Probability. For example, if you added more security

cameras to offset a potential crisis, remember to make sure they are in good working order. The same goes for policies and procedures you've put into place. Take the time now and then to revisit every change you made to your operations.

If you are a larger company (250) employees or more, it is highly recommended that you go through a tabletop exercise at least annually to test your plan. Make it as real as possible and go through the drill as if everything is happening to you in real time. Choose a different crisis each time so that you come to understand that every event is different, but there are common responses (Response Modules) that you can standardize and use in any number of situations.

Developing an Effective Crisis Plan

Congratulations! Now you know what possible crises can occur and how they will impact your business. You may have even gotten far enough that you've figured out how to move some of those Red Range events into the Yellow or Blue areas.

You still need a plan. As noted earlier, having a well-crafted crisis plan allows you to manage any situation on the fly with confidence. Though you may never know when a fire will break out, at least you'll know where the fire extinguishers are.

Plan Elements

A business crisis plan – or business continuity plan – has several essential elements. How comprehensive your plan is depends on your crisis planning and management acumen as well as the size of your company or operations. Obviously, a larger company or one with satellite operations requires a more detailed plan than a small community business with a couple of employees.

A crisis plan:

- Outlines who is on the response team, including any subject matter experts.
- Defines the roles of each member as well as the location and setup of the Crisis Command Center.

- Defines the initial steps for responding to a crisis so you can take immediate action while enacting other portions of the plan that may require longer lead times, such as finding an alternative place to work.
- Outlines the steps required to handle media inquiries.
- Includes contact information for local businesses that may be needed in an emergency response (locksmiths, 24-hour food vendors, electricians, IT specialists, city officials, etc.).
- Serves as the operational plan both in times of crisis and during rehearsals.

A quick word here. Every business owner should have at least a basic crisis plan. Even if you are the only one in the company, you want to map out some fundamental steps to ensure that your business can continue if a natural or manmade disaster strikes. It doesn't have to read like *War and Peace*. But it should have the basics, even if you're the only subject matter expert and the Crisis Command Center is your spare bedroom.

Crisis Plan Components

A workable plan should have these components:

- **A flexible set of response modules.** As you identify the various crises that can affect your company's operations, you'll start to see patterns of how you should respond. Modularizing these responses can help you respond quickly and appropriately in the first minutes, hours and days of a crisis. Modules may include: a lockdown of the facility, evacuation, medical containment, grief management protocols, police or fire response, etc.
- **Linkage between crisis and modules.** These modules can be linked to each possible crisis. For instance, a "shooter on site" scenario could trigger 1) a lockdown, 2) a police response, 3) possible evacuation at their direction, 4) grief counseling and 5) an off-site communications center. A robbery may require modules 2 through 4, but not the first and not necessarily the fifth. You should be able to assign modules to each crisis in the order they should occur. A simple Excel spreadsheet can be used for this purpose.
- **A set chain of command.** The plan should outline who is in charge. This includes who can call the Crisis Command Center into action, who is in charge of making response decisions, what the hierarchy is for reviewing and approving media releases and talking points, alternates to cover assigned roles should someone be on vacation or ill and who would handle a remote or off-site CCC.
- **Activation protocols.** What will trigger activation of the Crisis Command Center? This will be the signal to move from business as usual to "war room mode" as well as what signals a return to "normal" after the crisis has passed and there's no longer a need for a CCC.
- **Clear team roles.** There should be clear roles for who handles media relations, employee communications, social media, stakeholder/ stockholder relations, the Media Briefing Room and other responsibilities. These should be clearly delineated so the lines of responsibility as well as the lines of reporting are clear to all team members. Strong leadership is essential here. Even if you have a half dozen employees, they need to be led through a crisis. As their employer, you have a responsibility for their safety and their livelihood. They depend on you to lead in times of crisis, even if you're the one handling all the decisions yourself.
- **Clear communication channels.** Your team needs to know which channels to use to respond to each crisis. You also want to outline alternative communication channels should a primary or traditional channel be disabled or temporarily unavailable. For instance, it's easy to think you'll use your cell phones in a crisis, but in a widespread disaster the networks can be jammed and virtually useless. Think outside the box on this. You may have to get old school in communicating during a crisis.
- The plan should outline things like who to contact to provide security, how to start the generator for emergency power and what can be run from it, where the extra fuel is stored, the location of emergency food, water and medical suppliers, etc. You should also have a central meeting area for workers and a way to conduct business away from your primary office, even if temporarily.
- Practice makes perfect as they say. Following are some of the ways you can run drills, starting with the easiest.

- **Walk-throughs.** Just as it says, a walk-through of the plan with a couple what-if scenarios to illustrate how the plan works.
- **Tabletop exercises.** A scenario is developed in advance and the team goes through it using the chain of command and the processes outlined in the plan. Afterwards, the team discusses what worked and what didn't to make changes to the plan if needed.
- **Event simulations.** This is a real-world situation in which the team responds to a mock incident. This simulation lasts several hours and multiple complications are introduced into it to allow the team to manage both the primary crisis as well as secondary incidents.
- **Full drills.** These are typically reserved for companies that deal with high stakes crises such as potential oil spills, chemical leaks or airplane accidents. These are as real as possible, including victims and ever-shifting scenarios. They are also very expensive to conduct and take months of planning.
- **Be proactive, not reactive.** Often a crisis that could easily be controlled at the outset will spin out of control and get worse than it would have ordinarily been if you ignore it or pretend that it will just go away on its own. Boeing's response to the 737 MAX accidents is a good example. Don't put your head in the sand – always be on the lookout for a pending crisis while it's still in the prodromal stage and tackle it intelligently and proactively.
- **Stay organized.** Don't wait for a crisis to occur to take the plan for a spin. Rehearsing, updating and maintaining your plan will help you remain crystal clear while everything around you appears to be spinning out of control.
- **Learn from the past.** If a crisis does strike, use the lessons learned to improve upon your crisis management skills. Meet with your team after everything settles down and objectively review what worked and what didn't.
- **Don't place blame.** In the midst of a crisis, mistakes will be made. This is natural. After all, we're only human and have to deal with human emotions such as fear, grief and anger. Don't be quick to blame. Show the world a united front internally and externally and after the crisis has passed, after you've been able to gain some perspective, and review how things could have gone better.
- **Don't do everything yourself.** As a situation unfolds, you'll need to be juggling a lot of balls. This is not the time to be a control freak. Assemble your team and use their collective strengths and talents to address the different aspects of a crisis, from media relations and operations to logistics and finance.

Some Helpful Tips

The Japanese word for crisis is 危機, or kiki. Fittingly, it has the kanji 危, which means danger, and 機, which means opportunity. Depending upon how you plan for or respond to a crisis, it can be both a danger and an opportunity for you.

Here are some helpful things to think about as you develop your crisis plan.

- **Plan for the worst and best possible scenarios.** This will help you consider all the options, knowing what the worst outcome could be (danger) as well as the best possible outcome (opportunity).

- **Think outside the box.** When a crisis occurs, step out of what is known about the situation and approach the problem from all sides. Be willing to take measured risks to solve the problem.
- **Stay calm.** A crisis plan is designed so that you don't have to panic. You can have clarity, even in the toughest, most uncertain moments because you have a well-conceived plan in place that you can follow.
- **Don't get caught up in the moment.** Remember. The crisis will eventually pass. It may be hours, days, weeks or even months, but it will pass and a new normal will form. Be patient and don't waste a lot of time fighting a battle that has nothing to do with winning the war.

Crisis Response Modules

Earlier, we alluded to the idea of modules. Many events require similar responses. When possible, you should identify these modular responses and create a workflow for each.

Let's look at an example: A hazardous chemical spill just happened at your facility. A response scenario, complete with the interchangeable response modules (Hold and Evacuate in this case), may look like this.

CRISIS: Hazardous Spill Onsite

1. Isolate the spill area and remove everyone from the site to a position of safety.
2. Do not pull the fire alarm unless an evacuation can be conducted without entering the spill area.
3. Shut down the ventilation system to affected areas.
4. Administer immediate first aid, if required.
5. Decontaminate personnel, if required. Prevent contact with other staff.
6. Call 911.
7. Notify your supervisor and the Crisis Communications Center (CCC) Manager.
8. Let the facility manager or CCC Manager brief the Fire Department when it arrives.
9. The CCC Manager may activate the Crisis Communications Center if:
 - Operations have been disrupted.
 - There are injuries or fatalities.
 - The leak affects the surrounding community.

- There is an imminent danger to neighboring homes or businesses.
- In cooperation with the Fire Department, the CCC will determine if a Hold or Evacuation is required (you can use this response module in a number of crises).

If a **HOLD** is required:

- Keep all staff in their present locations.
- Continue activities as usual.
- Take attendance to ensure everyone is accounted for.
- Follow directions provided by the CCC and/or the Fire Department.
- Release no one.
- Ignore/extend closing times.
- Seal off and secure facility as much as possible.
- Limit media access to a remote location.

If an **EVACUATION** is required:

- Work with emergency responders to establish an evacuation plan that is safe and efficient.
- Announce the need to evacuate over the PA system, asking personnel to utilize the evacuation maps in their work area.
- Ask that employees take any personal belongings within their immediate reach with them (purses, coats, mobile phones, for example).

- The last person out checks to see that everyone has been evacuated, turns out the lights and closes the door.
- Employees report to their designated central meeting area.
- The immediate supervisor takes attendance and reports any absences to their manager or the CCC Manager who reports any missing personnel to emergency responders with their name and last known location.
- All staff shall remain in their emergency meeting area until advised otherwise. No one is to leave.
- Traffic is to be redirected as necessary. If alternative transportation is needed, work with the CCC Manager to secure it.
- When allowed, employees may check with their supervisor and either return to work or leave the facility for home.

10. Following the end of the crisis, complete all reports and claims.

- Submit to the facility manager and/or CCC Manager as soon as possible.

As you can see, the Hold or Evacuation process is the same, whether it is for a hazardous materials spill, a natural disaster or any other threat that may put employees in danger or jeopardy. You can create a module out of it that can be used elsewhere or may even become a sign in your lunchroom or warehouse.

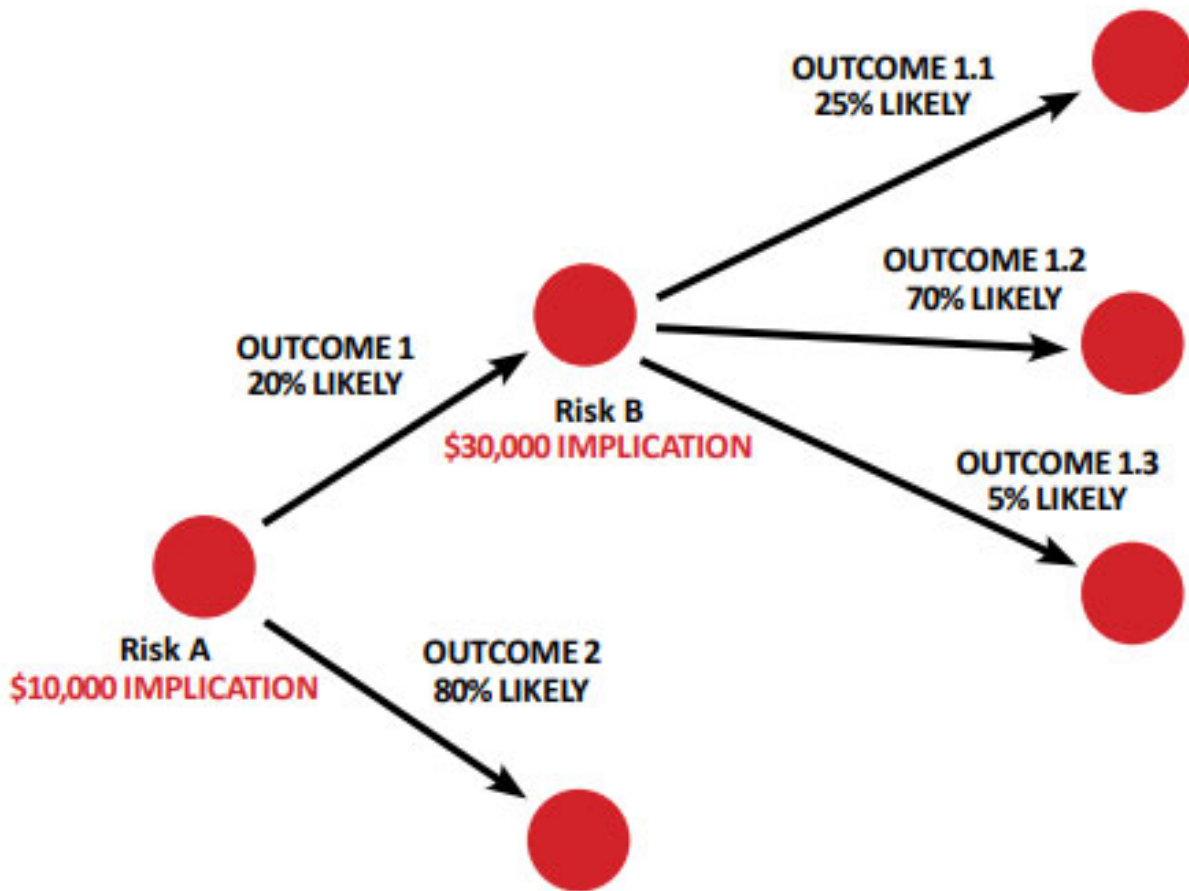
Decision Trees

It's easy to make decisions in a vacuum. This is not to suggest that decisions should be made by committee when a crisis occurs. But you may want to have a decision team that can serve as trusted advisors. They can help you brainstorm solutions, explore options and come to consensus on what must be done.

To help the team in the planning and execution of any crisis response strategy, you may want to use decision trees in your training exercises and during an actual crisis. These trees will help you flesh out possible options along with their potential outcomes.

They work like this:

If we select **'Risk A'**, what might happen? Well, **'Outcome 1'** may happen or **'Outcome 2'**. If you choose **'Outcome 1'**, then **'Outcome 1.1'**, **'Outcome 1.2'** or **'Outcome 1.3'** might happen. If you were to select **'Outcome 1.2'**, then **'Outcome 1.2.1'** could happen or **'1.2.2'** and so forth. Try to take this decision tree out five levels and see what the possibilities are. This can help you arrive at decisions much more quickly since you'll have a fairly good idea how each one will play out down the road.



Resuming Operations

Congratulations! A crisis has struck, you were prepared for it, and it has passed. Now what? You may have to start from scratch, pick up somewhere in the middle, or continue on from where you left off, a little worse for wear.

These checklists will help you get your business up to speed more quickly and hopefully more completely, once a crisis enters Stage 4: Crisis Resolution. Feel free to modify it to suit your own organization, as this is just a framework. A downloadable version is available in the Templates & Resources section.

Advance Planning Checklist

1. Identify a Continuity Operations team for your company.
2. Decide who can order a reduction, shutdown or relocation of operations in times of crisis or immediately following a crisis.
 - Determine who must be paid, how long each staff member will be paid, how they will work remotely, how paid time off may be used during a slowdown or shutdown and what benefits will be paid and for how long.
3. Create duplicate records of all critical business documents: business license, articles of incorporation, partnership agreements, bylaws, EIN and business license numbers, corporate seal, minutes and resolutions from official meetings, insurance policies, software registration numbers, etc., vendor lists, contact information, employee directories and personnel records, etc.
4. Back up of all key data on servers and company computers. Ideally, data should be backed up at least weekly to the cloud or remote server locations that are off-site and offer remote access capabilities.
5. Identify all the functions that are critical to survival. These are the services that need to be maintained during a crisis and/or restored following a crisis.
 - Administrative
 - Information Technology
 - Accounting/Bookkeeping
 - Human Resources
 - Facilities
 - Production, Warehousing, Fulfillment
 - Inventory
 - Raw Materials/Supplies
 - Customer Service
 - Communications/Marketing/Media Relations
6. Develop and maintain a technology plan
 - Critical and non-essential functions
 - Remote access to data, systems and computers
 - Web access
 - Teleconferencing capabilities
 - Logins and passwords
 - Software ID/registration information and codes
7. Develop a plan to continue payroll, billing and collection functions.

8. Alternate locations to continue office, customer and fulfillment needs.

- Office spaces available
- Warehouse spaces available (if applicable)
- Furnishings available
- Parking/Access
- Phone/Internet access
- Utilities

If a Reduction, Shutdown or Relocation is Possible:

1. Inform the president/owner.
2. Contact the CCC Manager.
3. Follow the instructions in the Business Continuity Plan and the Crisis Communications Plan for the specific incident in question.
4. Notify personnel, board, customers and suppliers of the potential for a slowdown, shutdown or relocation.
5. Test the employee section of your website and the out-of-town phone number employees should contact to leave an 'ok message' in a crisis.

If a Reduction, Shutdown or Relocation is Required:

1. Activate the Business Continuity Plan and the Crisis Communications Plan.
2. Secure the company's facilities as outlined in each plan.
3. Notify stakeholders that a slowdown, shutdown or relocation is occurring. Give them further instructions.
4. Determine near-term liquidity needs.
5. Arrange for mail to be stopped, held or forwarded temporarily to a new location.
6. Track the recovery expenses of all personnel for possible reimbursement, such as overtime, travel or equipment rentals.
7. Record any injuries in the OSHA logs and be sure you report these to the state's L&I department.
8. Determine what resources (staff, technology, equipment, facilities, etc.) are needed to move back, reopen or restart operations.
9. Create a phased approach to resume full operations.
10. Communicate this plan to the Business Continuity Plan team, president/owner and CCC Manager.
11. Communicate this plan to employees.

Resuming Operations Checklist

1. Inspect facilities for damage or its suitability for resumption of operations. Get necessary state, county and local approvals to return to operations.
2. Confirm with local authorities that it is safe for employees to return to work (i.e., roads are clear, bridges are safe, facility has been decontaminated, etc.).
3. Re-establish utilities.
4. Establish business priorities.
5. Contact initial staffing needed to reopen for business.
6. Inventory damages.
7. Check documentation requirements for insurance, federal, state and local disaster aid, etc.
8. Re-establish computer systems, retrieve back ups.
9. Contact vendors.
10. Bring in all services that were performed remotely.
11. Bring personnel back in phases to support functions as they are restored.

Summary

Wrapping Things Up.

This guide should provide you with enough of a foundation in crisis management to get started. It is by no means comprehensive, as there are simply too many variables to be factored in, such as your industry, company size, experience managing crises, location, etc. to cover every conceivable scenario.

We hope you will consider creating a plan sooner or later. The ability of your business to soldier on when a crisis strikes is not only good for your bottom line, but good for your employees, customers and Washington's economy.

You don't have to start with a grandiose plan either. Instead, start simple. For example, ask yourself if an earthquake were to happen tomorrow, what emergency supplies should be on hand to care for your employees if they have to shelter in place. This would include such things as flashlights, first aid kits, emergency rations, water and even a whistle at

workstations so you can tell if someone is trapped if part of the building collapsed or an office door became jammed.

The success of a well-crafted crisis plan isn't in the planning or the paperwork, but in the ability to successfully meet a crisis head on, weather it with confidence, and emerge from the other side. As noted at the beginning of this guide, a crisis isn't a matter of if, but when.

When the next crisis strikes, will you be ready? And if you're ready, will the situation be a challenge, an opportunity, or both?

For more information, research "crisis planning" or "crisis communications" online or in your local library or bookstore. Amazon.com also has a wide selection of books available on the subject of crisis planning and communications.

Appendix A

SAMPLE CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLAN

To help you assemble your own business continuity plan, we've included a sample one that was used for a retail technology company. This was a medium-sized business, so some of the plan elements may be geared to a larger organization with more layers of decision making than yours. But the process remains the same, even if you're a mom and pop company with just a few employees.

Many of the roles and/or responsibilities can be assigned to the same person, reducing the size of the response team. Your own company may not need all the assigned functions either, but you should give consideration to each step in the plan before you decide to discard them or add them in later.

[ORGANIZATION NAME]

Crisis Communications Plan



[ORGANIZATION NAME]
Crisis Communications Plan
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Objectives
Crisis Communications Policy.....
Crisis Command Center Team.....
Subject Matter Experts (SME's).....
Crisis Command Center (CCC)
Crisis Command Center
Requirements.....
CCC Activation.....
Crisis Command Center Team Responsibilities.....
Crisis Command Manager.....
Crisis Command Center Team.....
Spokesperson Responsibilities.....
Interview Requests
Initial Incident Fact Sheet.....
Media Liaison Responsibilities.....
Media Briefing Center
External Communications Specialist.....
Internal Communications Specialist.....
Community/Shareholder Communications Specialist.....
Telephone Procedures.....
CCC Administrator
Legal Specialist
Subject Matter Experts (SME's)
Post Crisis Evaluator
On-site Communications
Crisis Command Center Exercises.....
Frequency
Followup.....
 Additional Resources.....
CopyCenters.....
Delivery Services.....
Employment, Temporary.....
Food.....
Hotels.....
Post Office.....
Rentals.....
Supplies, General.....
Supplies, Graphics Arts.....
Supplies, Photos.....
Transportation.....
Other.....

OBJECTIVES

- To formulate and channel accurate information to internal and external audiences during a crisis.
- To ensure that targeted audiences receive crisis-related information through the most efficient, expedient channels.
- To take preventative steps ahead of predictable crises to avoid communication gaps during an emergency.
- To create a plan that is adaptable and can be used for making necessary announcements with the least possible disruption to the normal course of business operations and the corporation's bottom line.

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

In an emergency or crisis situation involving an [organization] activity, operation or employee, the company's general policy shall be to provide internal and external publics with full and accurate information as soon as possible. Such information must always be based on verifiable facts.

In these situations, it is essential that an attitude of honesty, reasonableness and cooperation be maintained at all times whenever dealing with these publics. Such information, however, must be consistent with the safety of all [organization] personnel and with the security of the company's property and operations.

CRISIS COMMAND CENTER TEAM

Megan Douglas Corporate Communications Supervisor	Work: (555) 634-626 Home: (555) 391-5937
Rob Barker CCC Manager	Work: (555) 391-6324 Home: (555) 935-9924
Renee Jones Corporate Communications Coordinator	Work: (555) 491-6247 Home: (555) 820-5811
Elaine Walesby Investor Relations	Work: (555) 391-5160 Home: (555) 435-1356
Tom Charles Corporate Counsel	Work: (555) 391-6542 Home: (555) 636-4567
Debbie Pearson Events Supervisor	Work: (555) 391-6217 Home: (555) 435-1245
Lisa Lynn Media Supervisor	Work: (555) 391-6234 Home: (555) 643-0568

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS (SME'S)

When necessary the following individuals can be contacted to serve as Subject Matter Experts (SME's) on specific topics:

Distribution

Robert Dong
VP of Operations

Work: (206) 391-6789
Home: (206) 435-3421

Facilities

Gary Rustan
Facilities Manager

Work: (206) 391-5398
Home: (206) 425-1211

Finance

Carolyn Smyth
SVP of Finance

Work: (206) 465-9865
Home: (425) 323-1211

Human Resources

Jim Francisco
VP, Human Resources

Work: (206) 373-0506
Home: (253) 234-1132

Information Services

Brad Bowden
VP, Information Services

Work: (206) 455-6900
Home: (253) 990-5436

Loss Prevention

Rick Smathers
Director of Loss Prevention

Work: (206) 392-1322
Home: (425) 880-6578

Merchandising

Ed Thompson
VP of Merchandising

Work: (206) 392-1343
Home: (360) 455-8045

Retail Operations

Nancy Douglas
VP of Store Operations

Work: (206) 392-1433
Home: (425) 455-1311

Real Estate

RJ Rogers
VP of Real Estate

Work: (206) 391-6879
Home: (360) 543-6677

Shipping/Receiving

Jim Wooden
Corporate Services Supervisor

Work: (206) 391-1222
Home: (360) 990-6500

CRISIS COMMAND CENTER

If the situation warrants, the CCC Manager will direct that communication functions be centralized in the Crisis Command Center.

Crisis Command Center Location

- Conference Room #2-D

Alternate Site if #2-D is Inoperable

- Training Room #6-B

Center Features

- Centralized access to all departments/floors
- Formal reception area nearby to receive media (Room #2-E)
- Two copy centers nearby
- Close proximity to communication staff offices
- Supply closet down hall
- Multiple phone lines

CCC Satellite Operations

At times, a crisis may warrant the establishment of a satellite Crisis Command Center at the site of the crisis or at a remote facility should headquarters become unavailable. This may include a robbery with employee fatalities, an extended hostage situation or a natural disaster.

The CCC Manager is responsible for making this determination after assessing the situation and consulting with CCC Team Members.

Identified locations

Starbucks
1101 Main St.
Issaquah, WA

McDonalds
122 S. State St.
Issaquah, WA

Law Offices of Pike & Real
433 3rd Ave., Suite 220
Seattle, WA

CCC REQUIREMENTS

If the CCC is activated, some or all of the following items should be added to the room:

- 3 computers (from CCC team offices)
 - 2 Laptops from IS – ext. 5770
- Printer for computers
 - Spare toner cartridges & paper
- Extra telephones (from team member offices)
 - Speakerphone from 2-E
- Powers strips/extension cords
- Dry markers for wall board
- Crisis Toolkit #1 (see appendix)
- Calculators
- Company cellphones with chargers
- Personal cellphones with chargers
- Corporate credit card

CCC Activation

In a crisis situation, the Crisis Command Center will be called into action three ways:

1. At the direction of the Corporate Communications Team
2. At the direction of the CEO or President
3. At the direction of the CCC Manager

When the Crisis Command Center Is Activated . . .

When contacted by the CCC Manager, perform the following tasks immediately:

- Call forward your phone to the CCC:
- Procedure:
 - Dial *3
 - Enter CCC extension
 - Three beeps will confirm forwarding
- Instruct a coworker to cancel your appointments in four-hour increments.
- If your phone has been designated as a CCC telephone, take it with you.

- Take your Crisis Plan Binder.
- If your computer has been designated as a CCC terminal, get coworkers to assist you with bringing it to the communications center.
- Proceed to the CCC where the CCC Manager will further direct you.

Once the CCC Team is Assembled, the Crisis Command Center Manager Will:

- Instruct the receptionist/switchboard that any incoming calls from the media are to be forwarded to the CCC.
- Post signs on CCC door limiting access to room.
- Assign two team members to install equipment (phones/PC's).
- Inform reception area that media representatives may be arriving and to have them wait in reception area until a CCC Team Member meets them.
- Contact CCC Team alternates if primary team members are unavailable.
- Contact president's administrative assistant so she can inform the senior management team, letting them know that the CCC is active and that further information/status reports are forthcoming.
 - Her number is: (206) 391-4355
- Begin immediate fact finding investigations to determine crisis status and key players.
- Instruct all key players that no statements are to be made to the media or staff unless the CCC directs them to do so.

CRISIS COMMAND CENTER TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

CRISIS COMMAND CENTER MANAGER

General Responsibilities

- Assess the situation and call the necessary members of the Crisis Command Center into session.
- Direct the CCC Team in crisis management, containment and resolution.
- Mobilize appropriate departments and Subject Matter Experts (SME's) in the company to assist with crisis.

- Keep senior management informed of the status of all pertinent crisis communications.
- Authorize crisis-related expenditures and communications.

Skill Set

- Extensive knowledge of communication process and, in particular, a detailed working knowledge of media relations techniques.
- Strong organizational decision-making capabilities.
- General understanding of operating procedures for a variety of crisis scenarios.
- Familiarity with the organizational structure and roles of key personnel involved in the incident.
- Coaching and facilitation skills.
- Duties - Mobilization

Duties - Mobilization

- Initiate call down roles.
- Assign and post roles.
- Assign on-scene team, if necessary.
- Receive updates from site.
- Update senior management on situation.
- Ensure sufficient resources are in place.
- Ensure first communications to the media are being developed.

Duties - Sustained Response

- Participate in the CCC policy and decision-making process and ensure the senior management team is advised of policies and decisions.
- Develop and adjust the communication strategy during the course of the crisis in consultation with the CCC.

- Periodically review the effectiveness of the communication response and adjust the roles as required. If the response continues for more than 12 hours, assign shifts.
- Ensure that external communication activities between the site and the CCC are coordinated to ensure message consistency.
- Ensure the CCC is supported in the planning and execution of contacts with appropriate government officials.
- Ensure the appropriate senior company representatives are utilized as company spokespersons.
- Set up and manage the news release approval process.

CRISIS COMMAND CENTER TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

General Responsibilities

- Secure necessary assistance, support and materials to meet crisis needs.
- Serve as conduits of key information, conducting fact finding missions and verifying information as it comes in.
- Formulate strategies for addressing primary and secondary crisis components and indicators.
- In conjunction with Corporate Communications, assist with the creation and distribution of external and internal information through most effective channels.
- Conduct follow-up evaluations in the chronic crisis phase.

Duties - Sustained Response

- Participate in the CCC policy and decision-making process and ensure the senior management team is advised of policies and decisions.
- Develop and adjust the communication strategy during the course of the crisis in consultation with the CCC.
- Periodically review the effectiveness of the communication response and adjust the roles as required. If the response continues for more than 12 hours, assign shifts.
- Ensure that external communication activities between the site and the CCC are coordinated to ensure message consistency.

- Ensure the CCC is supported in the planning and execution of contacts with appropriate government officials.
- Ensure the appropriate senior company representatives are utilized as company spokespersons.
- Set up and manage the news release approval process.

SPOKESPERSON

Answer media inquiries about the crisis in a way that is clear, concise, accurate and timely so that the reporting accurately covers the facts and offers a balanced view of the incident.

General Responsibilities

- Serve as contact person for all media queries regarding crisis.
- Activate Media Briefing Room and oversee its operations.
- Organize equipment and supply needs for the briefing room.
- Maintain up-to-date and readily accessible phone/email list of media contacts.

Skill Set

- Previous training in media relations.
- Skilled at using clear, concise language, particularly when under pressure.
- Practical media interview experience as part of regular job.
- Working knowledge of all the company's operations and facilities.
- Knowledge of how the media process works during a crisis.

Duties - Mobilization

- Determine whether the primary Media Briefing Room will be located at Corporate HQ, at a remote location or at the scene of the crisis.

If a Media Briefing Center is established remotely or on the scene of crisis:

- Take one of the toolkits.
- Provide the CCC Manager with the details concerning Media Briefing Room location, phone number, and travel arrangements.
- Get background updates.

Upon arrival at the crisis site:

- Work with on-scene officials to develop a situation analysis.
- Gather initial statements and details.
- Decide who is responsible for the news conference.
- Determine if technical and senior spokespeople are required.
- Brief the CCC Team on the situation and maintain regular contact. Provide the CCC Manager with media briefings as necessary.

Once a situational analysis is completed:

- Work with the External Communications Specialist to prepare the initial release using known facts.
- Get the initial release approved.
- Coordinate the initial release distribution to the media.
- Start the media response.
- Develop daily media schedule.

Duties - Sustained Response

- Respond to all media inquiries in a timely, accurate, and sincere manner.
- Pass uncompleted requests for information to the CCC Manager for further action.
- Link into the media monitoring and analysis process to ensure tracking of response for possible correction. Request specific tracking of certain sensitive interviews.
- Participate in the information updates conducted by the CCC Manager.
- Advise CCC Team of potential issues identified from interviews so strategies can be modified and appropriate information gathered.
- Working with the CCC Team, organize and conduct news conferences, briefings and photo opportunities.
- Coach CCC members and senior managers before interviews or conferences.

The Spokesperson shall serve as the primary contact point for all media queries and shall hold media briefings in the Media Briefing Room, if necessary.

General Guidelines

- Fact sheets and corporate profiles containing background information about (organization) should be prepared in advance for distribution in media briefings. Fact sheets should answer the most often asked questions.
- As necessary, brief, concise statements should be prepared by the CCC team. Once approved, the Spokesperson should immediately release it to the media by the customary channels. The Spokesperson should be careful not to offer additional information beyond what has been approved, but should promise to provide additional facts as they become available.
- Reinforce the (organization)'s commitment to assist the media whenever possible but remind them of the company's policies and reasons for protecting the identity of employees or other matters of privacy.
- While on company property, the media should be limited to specific areas as directed by the CCC Manager and/or Spokesperson. Ideally, this area should be the Media Briefing Room. When the media operates off-site, never interfere with their fact gathering and filming. Reports or photos of company personnel interfering with or threatening media representatives will probably cause more problems than unwanted coverage.
- Protect at all times the identities of anyone injured or killed as a result of the crisis until the victim's family can be notified by the proper authorities. Only the CCC Manager can authorize the release of victim's names.
- Never say "no comment." If you don't have the facts at hand, tell the media you will get back to them as facts become available.
- Be as straightforward and honest as possible. If you lie or tell half-truths you will be caught sooner or later. Bad news can't be hidden; the media will get their information elsewhere.

If the Spokesperson is Unavailable:

DO respond clearly and accurately to questions about the following:

1. What happened.
2. Where it happened (as specifically as you can ascertain).
3. When it happened (time and date only).
4. What equipment, facilities or products were involved.
5. Factual assessment of current situation.
6. Number known injured, taken to hospital or dead (no names).

DO NOT speculate and DO NOT attempt to answer questions about the following:

1. Monetary estimates of damage
2. Insurance coverage
3. Possible causes
4. Blame or responsibility
5. Anything that might imply company liability, fault or negligence.

FINALLY . . .

- If in doubt, leave it out. If you don't know the answer, when appropriate, say you will try to find out and call back as soon as possible.
- Nothing is ever "Off The Record." Assume everything you say will be quoted.
- If possible, keep a record of whom you've spoken to (including phone numbers) and what facts you've released to the media. Report any and all media contacts immediately to the CCC Team.

A more in-depth set of guidelines for dealing with the media during a crisis can be found in Appendix 'D' in this guide.

SPOKESPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES

Interview Requests

The decision whether or not to accept media interviews is a serious matter in a crisis situation. Before accepting or rejecting an interview, ask yourself the following questions:

- What do we have to gain by participating? If you have absolutely nothing to gain then you probably shouldn't accept. Also, if the risk factors outweigh the expected gain, you probably also want to pass.
- What are the risk factors? This is based on the level of comfort with the medium, who the interviewer is, the amount of preparation time you have, and how much the organization will be damaged if the media does a story without your participation.
- Are you really in control? The media may try to go around you; sometimes management will go around you. You need to appraise these risks realistically. One way is to make it clear to all who the official Spokesperson is.

- Can we get our message across? If you answer yes, then you have to make sure your Spokesperson understands the message and is able to explain it in everyday language.
- Who is the audience? An important factor is the audience itself. A local newspaper audience may be more responsive to your message than outsiders and may be a good place to start.
- Is there another way? Can you provide the media with the information they need in statement form, in Q&A form, or on background not for attribution? Is there someone else outside the company – an association, scientific or academic person – who may be able to deliver a similar but more credible message?
- Is it your company's fight? The media loves controversy and you can be drawn into one simply because you are willing to talk.
- How will audiences not directly in the coverage area be affected? You must consider the impact of what you say on customers, suppliers, shareholders and employees at other locations. Remember the Barilla CEO story. News travels fast and globally these days.
- How would your CEO and other members of your management react? In the final analysis you have to explain your recommendation or action to them. You probably have some clues from their reactions to previous interviews.
- Do you have a credible, trained Spokesperson? Media training can be calculable but you are not going to have time for it when the request for an interview is made. The time to train is in advance of the need.
- Are you playing damage control or are you trying to influence opinion? Some media give you a better opportunity to explain ideas in depth than others.
- Are the photos that are going to run simultaneously with the story or TV news report going to enhance your message or conflict with it? You may be able to provide pictures or camera access that will help.

INITIAL INCIDENT FACT SHEET

What happened? _____

How did it happen? _____

Do you know the cause? _____

Where did it happen? _____

When did it happen? _____

Was anyone injured? Killed? _____

Is there any immediate danger? _____

What is being done to control the problem? _____

MEDIA LIAISON RESPONSIBILITIES

Depending on the size of the business, the Spokesperson and Media Liaison roles can be filled by a single person.

Role

- To ensure the media are accommodated in a way that is cooperative and facilitating so that they can do their jobs as effectively and efficiently as possible.
- General Responsibilities
- Serve as liaison to the media.
- Supervise the set up and operation of the Media Briefing Room.
- Work closely with the Spokesperson to ensure that the media's information and facility needs are met.

Skill Set

- Event management experience.
- Interpersonal skills.
- Working knowledge of media needs during crisis.
- Understanding of (organization's) operations, security procedures and facilities.

Duties – Mobilization

- In coordination with the Spokesperson, identify the location for the Media Briefing Room and waiting area.
- Install Media Briefing Room signage.
- Set up and supply Media Briefing Room.

Duties – Sustained Response

- Arrange security procedures for media.
- Coordinate distribution of media ID/visitor badges.
- Staff Media Briefing Room as necessary.

- Let media know the Media Briefing Room is available for them.
- Ensure members of the media are escorted at all times while on (organization) property.
- Tell media of new status reports, news releases, and news conference schedules.
- Provide additional information, backgrounders and photo opportunities as appropriate.
- Serve as chairperson of news conferences, setting parameters and introducing key (organization) officials such as the Spokesperson.

MEDIA BRIEFING CENTER

If deemed necessary, a Media Briefing Room can be set up in the [name of conference or meeting room]. The Media Liaison is responsible for supervising its set up and operation.

- Assign a staff person to direct/guide media from the reception area to the Media Briefing Center.
- Set up a speaker's podium.
- Set up a flip chart with pad and make sure there are markers.
- Install power strips in wall outlets to ensure enough plug-ins.
- Distribute I.D. badges to media representatives.
- Provide the media with backgrounders and fact sheets as well as a list of nearby restaurants and hotels.
- If the crisis appears to be extended, arrange for soft drinks, coffee, cups and light snacks.
- Do not direct reporters to the cafeteria for food/drink items. Their contact with (organization) staff should be extremely limited.
- Assign the nearest restrooms as "media only" to prevent media from mixing with staff during the crisis.
- Establish a briefing schedule for the media. Post the next briefing time on the flip chart before you leave the room.
- If presentations are used in the briefing, assign a staff member to operate the equipment and lights.
- Ensure media has access to wi-fi, including the logins and passwords to any protected connections.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Depending on the size of the company, this function may be combined with the Spokesperson role and/or Media Liaison role.

Role

- To develop and deliver external communications that are consistent with internal messages.

General Responsibilities

- Serve as lead for the development and production of all media related communications.
- Act as primary expert regarding media actions and reactions to crisis.
- Work closely with other communications specialists to generate necessary materials and mobilize resources.
- If not the designated Spokesperson, work closely with Spokesperson and/or Media Liaison to coordinate media releases, briefings and interviews.
- This is not an outward facing role, but one of continuous production and support.

Skill Set

- Strong writing skills that allow quick and accurate communications.
- Familiarity with media relations and procedures.
- Broad knowledge of company operations and areas.
- Solid knowledge of print, trade and broadcast media.

Duties – Mobilization

- Establish procedures for information updates with CCC Manager.
- Ensure that all backgrounders, information kits and supporting materials are readied for distribution.
- Work closely with other members of the CCC Team to assess the situation and determine strategies and tactics for external responses.
- Prepare the first news release.
- Handle social media posting duties.

Duties – Sustained Response:

- Work with the CCC Manager and Spokesperson to develop necessary media materials.
- Brief the Spokesperson on key messages, statements, news releases and media tactics.
- Write and produce all external communications as directed by the CCC Manager.
- Identify appropriate communication methods and communicate the message.
- Respond to media inquiries if directed.
- Recommend communication strategies and tactics.
- Develop messages and arrange approvals.
- Manage social media.

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Role

- To deliver timely and accurate communications to employees which are consistent with external messages.

General Responsibilities

- Serve as lead for the development and production of all internal communications intended for employees.
- Act as primary expert regarding employee reactions to crisis.
- Work closely with other communications specialists to generate necessary materials and mobilize resources.

Skill Set

- Strong writing skills that allow quick and accurate communications.
- Familiarity with corporate culture and procedures.
- Broad knowledge of company operations and areas.
- Working knowledge of employee communication tactics and channels.

Duties – Sustained Response

- Initiate communication to employees.
- Identify appropriate communication methods and communicate the message.
- Reformat news releases and distribute them using appropriate distribution channels.
- Respond to employee inquiries.
- Recommend communication strategies and tactics.
- Develop messages and arrange approvals.

The Internal Communications Specialist is responsible for internal communications and can offer more specific recommendations concerning the creation and distribution of emergency communications to employees.

- If the crisis requires immediate action on the part of employees, contact by phone one or more key employee(s) in the affected area(s) and instruct them on what to do.
- Ensure that all communications distributed to the media are released internally simultaneously. In cases of media briefings, create an employee summary of the relevant points covered.
- Address employee concerns at all times in communications. Select appropriate communication channels to relay approved information.
- Protect identities of victims at all costs. Do not release information or names of injured or dead until the authorities notify next of kin.
- Explain to those involved in a crisis situation that it is in their best interest not to be interviewed by the media. During an interview under stressful conditions, they may inadvertently say something that could jeopardize their own safety or the safety of others.

COMMUNITY/SHAREHOLDER COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

If the company is small, this role may be simultaneously handled by the External or Internal Communication Specialist or another member of the CCC Team.

Role

- Handle public inquiries about the incident and deal with them accordingly in a way that is clear, concise, accurate and timely so that shareholders and key community publics have all the facts and information they need.

General Responsibilities

- Respond to all public inquiries in a timely, accurate, and sincere manner.
- Serve as point person for calls from the public.
- Participate in information updates conducted by the CCC Manager.
- Serve as liaison with the on-site CCC team member to maintain consistency and provide support where required.

Skill Set

- Experience or training in community/investor relations.
- Skilled at using clear, concise language, particularly when under pressure.
- Working knowledge of all the company's operations and facilities.
- General level knowledge of the incident, management procedures, and the individuals responsible for specific areas.

Duties - Mobilization

When you arrive at the CCC, find out:

- Set up public/shareholder response space and phone.
- Communicate via news releases that public calls will be taken via a 1-800 number, social media or other communications channel.
- Alert receptionist that all calls from the public must be forwarded to you.
- Start public response.

Duties - Sustained Response

General Tips For Dealing With The Public

- Immediately state facts proactively to callers. Be open and honest and tell them what you know.
- Maintain a continual flow of information to the public, including small changes.
- Involve the community in the response and decision-making process.

- Dealing With Visitors
- Visitors may be of several types, including:
 - Officials
 - Media with legitimate needs for information
 - Members of the Board of Directors
 - Employees wishing to help
 - Bystanders and curious members of the public
- Clear instructions must be given to Security regarding the type of visitor to be admitted, which depends on the current state of the emergency.
- A record of all visitors must be maintained.
- Requests for access to the crisis site must be referred to the CCC Manager.
- Visitors must always be accompanied by an (organization) employee who must ensure that visitors do not impede the crisis response process.

TELEPHONE PROCEDURES

General Guidelines

- Always answer the phone with “(organization) Communications Center. How may I help you?”
- Be courteous.
- Record calls on a Telephone Call Sheet.

If a Spokesperson is Unavailable

- Say: “All spokespersons are currently on the telephone. If you would like to leave a message, I will have one of them return your call as soon as he or she is available.”
- Be sure to ask the call the following information and record it on the Telephone Call Sheet:
 - Name
 - Organization

- Phone Number
- Information they are requesting
- Urgency

If a Caller is Upset

- Be a good listener; don't interrupt.
- Assess the urgency (by the tone of their voice).
- Ask for details.
- Reassure the caller that you will get help or information as soon as possible.
- No matter what, do not comment on the incident.
- Instead, say: "I'm sorry, but I'm not in a position to give you that information. I will have a Spokesperson get back to you as soon as one is available."

If a Caller is Rude

- No matter what the caller says, remain calm and don't interrupt.
- Maintain an attitude that "the caller is always right."
- Do not offer a personal opinion.
- Complete the Telephone Call Sheet and follow through just like you would any caller.
- Don't argue, just listen and be courteous and helpful.

If a Caller is in the Lobby and Wants to Speak with Someone

- Advise the caller that you will have to speak with the CCC Manager and call him or her back.
- Ask the caller to leave his or her name and number with the security officer.
- Advise the caller of the next news conference time, if appropriate.

CCC ADMINISTRATOR

This position is not required or can be combined with other duties. An executive assistant or administrative assistant would be ideal for this role.

General Responsibilities

- Maintain operational capability of Emergency Communication Center, including supplies and equipment.
- Ensure all members of the CCC Team and SME's are contacted.
- Monitor and record all CCC communications. Coordinate duplication and distribution as directed by CCC Manager.
- Make necessary arrangements for delivery/rental of additional resources.
- Work with other CCC Team members to activate CCC facilities, including rest area, supply area and Media Briefing Room.

LEGAL SPECIALIST

General Responsibilities

- Review all CCC communications for legal and regulatory compliance.
- Serve as approval point for Legal department.
- Serve as primary expert in legal matters.

SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

General Responsibilities

- Serve as primary expert on specific operational/procedural areas.
- Mobilize respective department's personnel and resources in support of CCC.
- Remove roadblocks to resolution of crisis.
- Serve as liaison between CCC and respective department(s).

POST-CRISIS EVALUATOR

General Responsibilities

After a crisis has passed, the CCC Manager will assign a Team Member to head up and author a post-crisis evaluation. This evaluation will include:

- Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of crisis-related actions.
- Recommendations for improving the crisis response system.
- Timelines for adopting improvements.

This report shall be reviewed by the entire CCC Team and sent to Senior Management with recommendations for updating and/or improving the process.

ON-SITE (REMOTE) COMMUNICATIONS

Some crises will dictate that a CCC Team member be sent to the scene of a crisis in progress to handle communication needs. When the CCC Manager deems this is necessary, the following procedures and guidelines come into play.

If the crisis is outside of Western Washington, the CCC Manager will assign an on-site representative and determine the most expedient mode of transportation.

On-site representative will take a Tool Kit. Supplies may include:

- Cellphone
- Pen & paper
- CCC manual
- Company phone directory
- Flashlight
- Blanket
- Flashlight batteries
- Aspirin/Tylenol
- GPS
- Hard candy/gum
- Digital camera
- Tissues
- Binoculars
- Tape/safety pins
- Watch/clock
- Safety pins/tape
- Cash
- Tablet 4G/LTE/wi-fi or PC with wi-fi
- Company credit card

Upon Arrival

- If the media is already present, identify yourself and tell them you will return promptly with as much information as possible. Indicate you will provide updates on behalf of the company.
- Establish a site for announcing the news as you receive it.
- Ensure that you have cellphone and/or wi-fi service.

Conduct Fact Finding

- Locate the (organization) manager/lead on-site and identify yourself and make your services available.
- If the individual has time, have him/her describe situation. If not, get as much information as possible from others.
- Contact the CCC to coordinate on-site responses and mobilize necessary support services.

Releasing Statements

- Draft a statement of pertinent facts and have it approved by the CCC Manager.
- Meet with the media at the predetermined point and read the statement.
- In cases of personal injury do not respond with names or details other than situation facts until notification has been made to families and the CCC Manager authorizes disclosure.

Working With the Media

- Having established yourself as the primary contact for the company on-site, the media will usually look to you to provide as much information as possible. Be calm and cooperative at all times.
- Media representatives are not allowed inside company property unless approved by the CCC Manager. When the situation warrants, a designated team member can coordinate the posting of security. Whenever possible, however, try to use common courtesy and provide the media with a comfortable place to wait off property.
- The media will attempt to film persons involved in the crisis. For the safety of employees, do not allow media to film or interview those involved.

Working With Employees, Clients & Victims of the Crisis

- Be calm and encouraging to the persons involved in the crisis.

- Explain to those involved in a crisis situation that it is in their best interest not to be interviewed by the media. During an interview under stressful conditions, they may inadvertently say something that could jeopardize their own safety or the safety of others.
- In the event of injury or death, you may speak on behalf of the company in expressing the (organization)'s concern and in commending the behavior of those employees at the scene.
- In a crisis involving field offices, provide clients with a list of alternative store/office locations and provide directions to the nearest store/office if possible.

Working With Families of Victims

- In any crisis involving injuries, death or hostage situations, families and friends of victims may come to the scene. Dealing with these families will be another part of the communicator's role.
- In any crisis (robbery, hostage situations, etc.), the FBI will take charge. Cooperate with their representatives at all times.
- If the situation is severe enough that families arrive on the scene, it is possible that the FBI may designate an official spokesperson of their own. Work closely with their representative, agree on formulation procedures for statements and updates, and institute ongoing communications between yourself, their spokesperson and the Crisis Communications Center.

If the FBI Designates a Spokesperson . . .

- Monitor all information and update the families of victims regularly. Use discretion to avoid additional fear and concern.
- If possible, designate a site as remote from the scene as the families will agree to. Stay with family members and attempt to keep them warm, fed, comfortable and informed. Attempt to keep them together as a group.
- Work closely with company officials during these arrangements.
- Discourage anyone from trying to get closer to the scene than the designated site for the families to wait out the crisis.
- Encourage the families to call one friend or relative and to ask that person to relay information to others who need to know in an effort to keep phone lines available for others.
- Establish yourself as their information source to attempt to control rumors.
- In cases of serious crisis, the CCC Manager may ask that counselors be contacted for employees and family members.

Appendix B

CRISIS IMPACT VALUE RATING SHEET

Answer these five key questions, ranking the impact of each between 1 (Least) to 10 (Most):

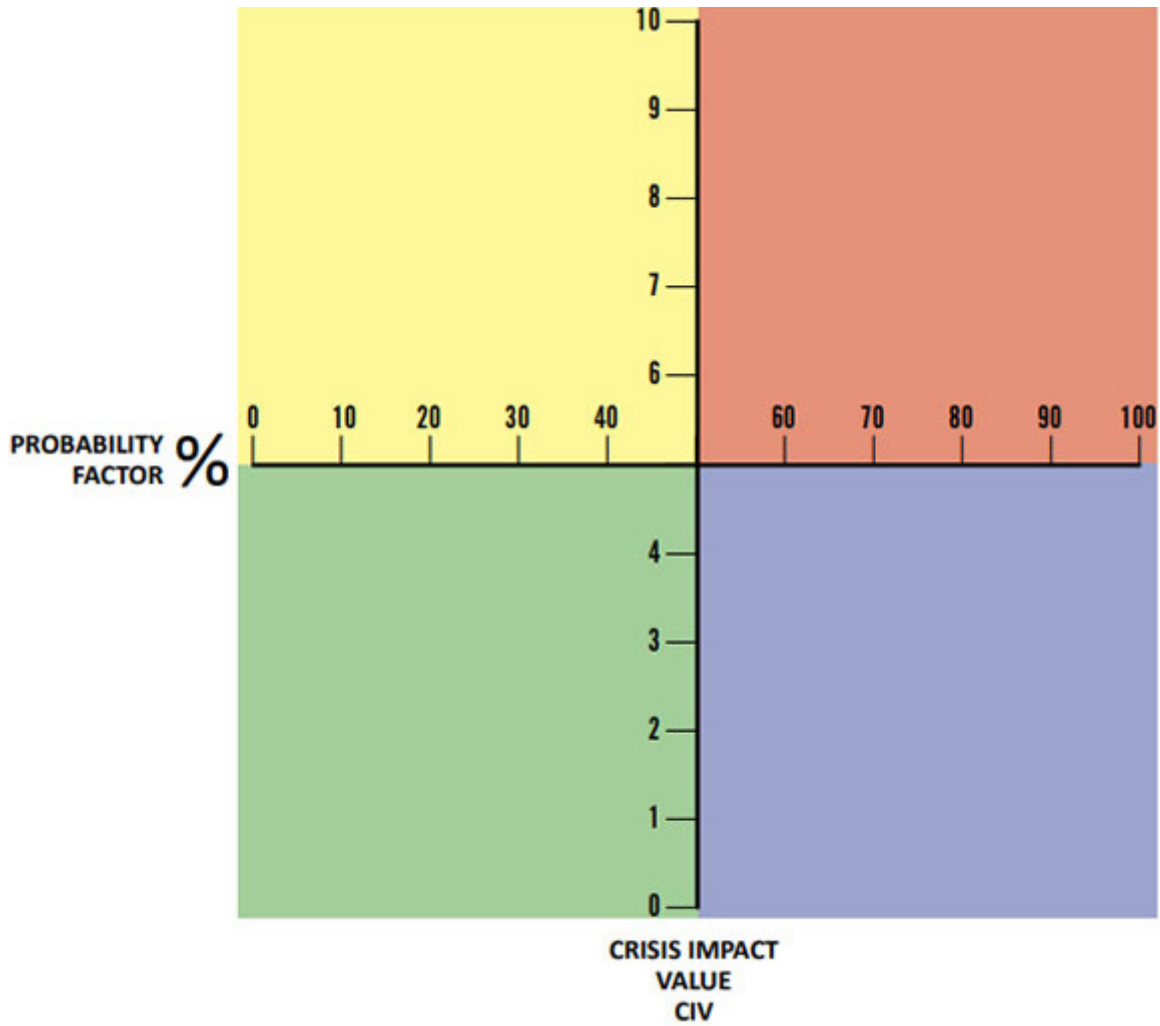
1. If crisis runs risk of escalating in intensity, how intense might it get and how quickly?
2. To what extent would your crisis fall under someone's watchful eye, such as the news media or government regulatory agency?
3. To what extent will crisis interfere with normal operations of your business?
4. Is your internal/external public image at risk?
5. To what extent would your company's bottom line be damaged?

Downloadable versions of these templates are available at: <http://bit.ly/disaster-templates>

EVENT	1	2	3	4	5	Average
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						
7.						
8.						
9.						
10.						
11.						
12.						
13.						
14.						
15.						

Appendix C

CIV PLOTTING GRID



Appendix D

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA IN A CRISIS

When you are in the midst of a crisis, an interview should be handled a little differently. While many of the skills used in day-to-day media relations will come into play, there are additional considerations when a crisis is unfolding and the media is clamoring for quotes, sound bites and answers, many of which may not even be known at the time.

By its nature, a crisis is very fluid. Before you ever grant an interview with a member of the media, consider these things:

- What do I have to gain by accepting an interview? If there is nothing to gain, don't feel compelled to accept it right then. Explain instead that you will be accepting interviews at such and such a time, as your focus at the moment is on the crisis. Or let the reporter know that a press conference has been scheduled in lieu of individual interviews.
- Can you control the situation enough to give an interview at this time? The media may want to go around you while you're trying to control the message, but there's really no point in conducting an interview when you have no concrete answers to provide. All you end up doing is looking confused and unorganized.
- Can you effectively get your key messages across? If the answer is yes, make sure you have gone through these messages and stick with them. Don't be tempted to wing it and answer questions that aren't anticipated. Choose a maximum of three key messages and stick with them.
- Who is the audience? Does the medium that the reporter work for serve an audience that would be responsive to or even interested in your message?
- How will other audiences be affected, such as customers, suppliers, shareholder or employees by an interview?
- Is there a better strategy available? Can a Q&A, backgrounder or other prepared piece such as a read statement do the job at the moment.
- Is it really your fight? Don't feel a need to be drawn into a battle that is not yours.
- Are you comfortable handling spokesperson duties in a crisis? A crisis isn't the time for on-the-job training. In the midst of a crisis your words carry even more weight and what you say or don't say can greatly influence audience perception.
- Are you trying to control damage, influence opinion or calm fears? It is a delicate balancing act and you need to know what the purpose of the interview is before accepting it. Some members of the media are more willing to listen openly to you than others who are rushing to meet a deadline with any sound bites or quotes they can find.

The good news is that if you're used to handling media requests and interviews, moving into crisis interview mode isn't a huge jump. If you do your homework and prepare properly, you should be able to weather any crisis interview.

Following Are Some Additional Tips You Will Find Helpful in Handling Crisis Interviews:

1. Don't grant an interview if you're not willing to talk about the crisis. Avoiding the issue or being evasive will not do you any good, and in fact, can make matters worse.
2. Just because something is damaging your reputation or that of your product, service, organization or cause, it's not a good reason for a reporter to leave it out of the story.
3. Reporters don't answer to your various stakeholders. Their job is to get the best story they can within the allotted time and tell it in such a way that it gets the best ratings and circulation, in turn, generating additional revenue for their company. Never forget who they work for and it's not you.
4. While it's OK. to reschedule an interview or do a general press conference instead, silence is never golden in a crisis. Silence won't make a crisis go away. It will only infer guilt where there may actually be none.
5. While there's no legal requirement to talk to the media, the media will talk about you, with or without your participation. Worse, they may go to secondary sources that don't have access to the information you do, including your competitors.
6. If you try to be evasive, the media will get you. They will portray you as wanting to hide something or accuse you of being evasive if you're not as candid and forthcoming as possible.
7. If you are the spokesperson in a crisis, be the only one to handle all media contacts. Don't share the responsibility or the message will become diluted.
8. If you are not the official spokesperson, keep your mouth shut. You may have to be the tough guy with the president of the company or anyone else who wants a moment in the limelight during a time of crisis. Close all channels of potential leaks of information that isn't coming directly from you.
9. Don't let lawyers speak for the company, unless you work for a law firm. Law and communications are very different disciplines and a lawyer's reluctance to say something because of possible litigation can make a crisis worse.
10. Don't ever panic. Eventually, the crisis will pass. How well you weather it depends largely on your ability to address the situation head on and communicate clearly and consistently with target audiences as the crisis enters its acute stage and finally, the post-crisis stage.
11. Craft your message to be as positive and truthful as possible. Then stick to the story.
12. If your organization made a mistake, admit to it. Then outline the steps you are taking to fix it. Don't act as if nothing is wrong. This is the quickest to way to destroy any credibility you have.

13. Emphasize the solutions that are being explored or implemented, especially if you caused the crisis in the first place.
14. Though a crisis is by its nature stressful, don't lose your cool. Don't defend a position. Don't panic.
15. Sound enthusiastic when delivering your messages.
16. Control the message by being proactive rather than defensive.
17. Reporters are really good at feeding on emotions. If they sense you're dodging questions or not telling the truth, they will roast you.
18. Try to remain calm. Be pleasant to the media. Act as if this is just like every other day, even if you feel as if everything is crashing down all around you.
19. Because of the stress of any crisis, be sure you really rehearse your messaging or statement.
20. If a reporter asks a question based on misinformation or incorrect facts, correct them immediately in a positive way. Don't admonish the reporter because in the heat of the moment they got their information wrong.
21. If someone is at risk or has been injured or has died, be compassionate and place the needs of the victims and their families ahead of everything.
22. Be prepared for the fact that a call can come out of the blue at anytime, making you aware of a crisis before it has reached your own team. Be polite and let the reporter know that you will get back to them as soon as you've had a chance to review the facts.
23. Prepare a crisis plan ahead of time and have it in place. Rehearse it at least annually and update it regularly.
24. If the media suddenly shows up at your office or home, don't be confrontational. This only shows you're guilty, even if you're not.
25. Try to remain calm.
26. Don't put your hands over your face or suddenly excuse yourself and leave.
27. Don't ask that a camera be turned off or get in the face of a reporter.
28. Don't threaten to call the cops or your attorneys or order members of the media off your property.

29. Never look or act guilty. Be cordial, be friendly and never let the media see you sweat.
30. When you're ready for your interview or press conference, stick to your messages. Don't answer questions you don't really have an answer for. Never guess in a crisis.
31. If you don't have a particular piece of information handy, say so. Then promise to get back to the reporter with the information they requested. Be sure that you do.
32. If you've already established solid relationships with the media, they may be more willing to cut you some slack and even give you the benefit of the doubt in the midst of a crisis. That's why it's important to keep media relationships positive and stay in contact regularly.
33. If you haven't fostered good media relationships, don't expect any reporter to cut you any slack at all.
34. If there is bad news disclose it all at once. Don't let it out bit by bit. This will only keep the crisis in the news longer as new facts are uncovered.
35. Hope that a crisis doesn't strike on a slow news day. This could make you front page news when on any other day you'd be lucky to be in Section C of the newspaper or the last segment of the 11 o'clock news.
36. If the news is bad, be sure you're the one that releases it.
37. The best time to release bad news is Friday afternoon at 4:59 p.m. going into a holiday weekend. Yes, that's being idealistic, but it also demonstrates that the timing of a crisis can determine how much play it gets. You never want to be the lead story on the evening news program if you have any control at all over it.

Appendix E

BUSINESS CONTINUITY CHECKLIST

Congratulations! A crisis has struck, you were prepared for it, and it has passed.

Now what? You may have to start from scratch, pick up somewhere in the middle, or continue on from where you left off, a little worse for wear.

This checklist will help you get your business up to speed more quickly and hopefully more completely, once a crisis enters Stage 4: Crisis Resolution. Feel free to modify it to suit your own organization, as this is just a framework.

Advance Planning Checklist

1. Identify a Continuity Operations team for your company.
2. Decide who can order a reduction, shutdown or relocation of operations in times of crisis or immediately following a crisis.
 - Determine who must be paid, how long each staff member will be paid, how they will work remotely, how paid time off may be used during a slowdown or shutdown and what benefits will be paid and for how long.
3. Create duplicate records of all critical business documents: business license, articles of incorporation, partnership agreements, bylaws, EIN and business license numbers, corporate seal, minutes and resolutions from official meetings, insurance policies, software registration numbers, etc., vendor lists, contact information, employee directories and personnel records, etc.
4. Back up of all key data on servers and company computers. Ideally, data should be backed up at least weekly to the cloud or remote server locations that are off-site and offer remote access capabilities.
5. Identify all the functions that are critical to survival. These are the services that need to be maintained during a crisis and/or restored following a crisis.
 - a. Administrative
 - b. Information Technology
 - c. Accounting/Bookkeeping
 - d. Human Resources
 - e. Facilities
 - f. Production, Warehousing, Fulfillment
 - g. Inventory
 - h. Raw Materials/Supplies
 - i. Customer Service
 - j. Communications/Marketing/Media Relations

6. Develop and maintain a technology plan
 - a. Critical and non-essential functions
 - b. Remote access to data, systems and computers
 - c. Web access
 - d. Teleconferencing capabilities
 - e. Logins and passwords
 - f. Software ID/registration information and codes
7. Develop a plan to continue payroll, billing and collection functions.
8. Alternate locations to continue office, customer and fulfillment needs.
 - a. Office spaces available
 - b. Warehouse spaces available (if applicable)
 - c. Furnishings available
 - d. Parking/Access
 - e. Phone/Internet access
 - f. Utilities

If a Reduction, Shutdown or Relocation is Possible:

1. Inform the president/owner.
2. Contact the CCC Manager.
3. Follow the instructions in the Business Continuity Plan and the Crisis Plan for the specific incident in question.
4. Notify personnel, board, customers and suppliers of the potential for a slowdown, shutdown or relocation.
5. Test the employee section of your website and the out-of-town phone number employees should contact to leave an 'ok message' in a crisis.

If a Reduction, Shutdown or Relocation is Required:

1. Activate the Business Continuity Plan and the Crisis Plan.
2. Secure the company's facilities as outlined in each plan.
3. Notify stakeholders that a slowdown, shutdown or relocation is occurring. Give them further instructions.
4. Determine near-term liquidity needs.

5. Arrange for mail to be stopped, held or forwarded temporarily to a new location.
6. Track the recovery expenses of all personnel for possible reimbursement, such as overtime, travel or equipment rentals.
7. Record any injuries in the OSHA logs and be sure you report these to the state's L&I department.
8. Determine what resources (staff, technology, equipment, facilities, etc.) are needed to move back, reopen or restart operations.
9. Create a phased approach to resume full operations.
10. Communicate this plan to the Business Continuity Plan team, president/owner and CCC Manager.
11. Communicate this plan to employees.

Reopening Operations

1. Inspect facilities for damage. Get necessary state, county and local approvals to return to operations.
2. Confirm with local authorities that it is safe for employees to return to work (i.e., roads are clear, bridges are safe, etc.).
3. Re-establish utilities.
4. Establish business priorities.
5. Contact initial staffing needed to reopen for business.
6. Inventory damages.
7. Check documentation requirements for insurance, federal, state and local disaster aid, etc.
8. Re-establish computer systems, retrieve back ups.
9. Contact vendors.
10. Bring in all services that were performed remotely.
11. Bring personnel back in phases to support functions as they are restored.

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