

CRISIS PR CHECKLIST

THINGS TO DO ...

DONE

A crisis is recognised.

Stop for a moment, assess the impact of the situation and the critical decisions that need to be made, and to whom they must be communicated.

Identify the trusted voice within your organisation to be the focus of communication.

Ensure that this person has the time and support to give it their full attention.

Initiate your crisis pr plan as soon as possible, alert your crisis comms team.

Define who is responsible for doing what – names, jobs, deadlines and processes.

Gather facts and prepare a briefing document.

Identify and contact any third parties that need to be involved or notified (excluding media).

Develop a holding statement as soon as possible, think about every word, check it, and have it proofread before issuing.

Prepare your media contact list in readiness to issue statements, releases etc.

Correct any factually incorrect reporting.

Allocate responsibility for monitoring social and traditional media, and reporting what is being said.

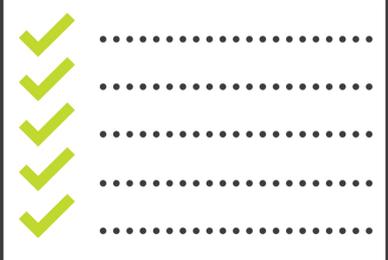
Set up a process to record all actions, contacts, media requests and messages deployed.

REMEMBER - Put people first in all comms.

VIVIDINK - 2020

CRISIS PR GUIDE

CRISIS PR CHECKLIST



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Be prepared.

Get your facts together, check them, and then check them again. This is a fast-moving situation and being as up to date with the facts and how they affect your organisation is key. Once you have them, make sure that you review them regularly. Miscommunication is heightened during a crisis and can be exaggerated by half-truths, distortions, or incorrect assumptions.

Getting the story right.

Work on developing a set of core messages, remember 3 is a magic number, it's easier to remember 3 key messages so try to align your comms behind them, then communicate the messages and the facts. When dealing with the media they will be looking for content that they can share with their audience quickly and easily, overly complex messaging is hard to communicate without loss of integrity – keep it simple.

A picture paints a thousand words.

If you can illustrate the messaging clearly, or evidence it with an image, then do so. Well-chosen images or infographics can make complex points and messages instantly clear.

Stay on the front foot.

This is not a time to be a shrinking violet hoping it will all go away, be active and not reactive. Research, prepare, gather your assets and then open up a dialogue with the media and channels that are appropriate to your organisation.

Command and control.

This is the time to lock down comms, make sure that all personnel, without exception, are aware of what is happening, and know where to refer external enquiries to if they receive them. Use only one spokesperson, one who communicates effectively and honestly, knows your communication plan, and can think on their feet.

Manage the flow.

Hold regularly scheduled news conferences, briefings, or reports, so that the information gets aired frequently and reliably.

Stay in control.

Sometimes interviews — face to face or via email — can become very pointed and even confrontational: do not get angry. Stay calm and friendly, even when you are asked the "hard" questions.

Never off the record.

Stay "on the record" in all interviews. Any comment worth saying should be said "on the record."

Always comment.

Try to think through any questions that a journalist may ask, it should be part of your preparation, and never say "no comment." Responding with "no comment" will pique the interest of reporters and to those reading, watching or listening. It sounds evasive and dishonest. If you genuinely don't know the answer, then say so and promise to get the information to that person. Then make sure that you do, and include all the other journalists in the loop.

Be responsive.

Respond to the news media quickly and fairly. Cooperate with reporters, be sensitive to deadlines, and provide all reporters with the same information. If you are reasonable with a journalist then you are likely to get a reasonable response.

Know what was said to whom.

Keep track of any and all media calls and requests, it's so important to be able to ensure that you have spoken to everyone that you need to communicate and that you have delivered the complete message to each of them. If you promised to get back to them with an answer you couldn't give at the time, make sure that you do and record it. It's not just important now, it will inform how you handle future incidents.

Never make it up!

Whatever you do, stick to the known facts, never speculate or engage in discussing rumours, possibilities or anything that you cannot substantiate, go back to No1 and if it isn't in there, you don't know. There is no shame in not knowing everything.