

Are You Ready for a Crisis?

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You've probably been busy at work, in addition to dealing with all the responsibilities that you have. But have you ever thought about what you would do in a crisis? It's not good to wait until something bad happens; you should be prepared in case you have to deal with an event that can negatively affect your reputation. Here are a few things to think about to get a plan in action:

1 – Put together a team.

Some people on your crisis communication team can include your firm's senior partner or one of the other partners, your public relations specialist, the leader in your firm who is closest to issues, any outside counsel you may use, and your online communications expert. You should also choose someone to be the dedicated spokesperson if an incident occurs.

2 – Consider your audience.

In order to prepare for a crisis, you should think about your potential audience, which is internal and external: employees, government agencies, the community, vendors and suppliers, clients, and of course, the media. Because your audience is varied, think about how you could effectively communicate with each group. Develop important media connections, and strengthen your existing ones inside and outside your firm.

3 – Prepare your online presence.

You most likely have a website that anyone can see, but prepare a "dark" section of your website that is not public, which can go live in case you need to communicate with the public during a crisis. Some possible sections could be a newsroom and a place to post statements, links, and special contact information. Also decide which social media platforms you will communicate through, and how you will communicate internally with your staff. Analytical tools for your online networks are also important to have ready, in addition to someone who will be responsible for analyzing online activity from other sources.

If you are prepared, you won't get blindsided if something horrible happens. Information moves rapidly, and you want to be ready to respond just as quickly.

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