

CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Do's and Don'ts

DO

Be First

Crises are time-sensitive. Communicating information quickly is almost always important. For members of the public, the first source of information often becomes the preferred source.

DO

Be Right

Accuracy establishes credibility. Information can include what is known, what is not known, and what is being done to fill in the information gaps.

DO

Be Credible

Do not compromise honesty and truthfulness during a crises.

DO

Express Empathy

Crises create harm, and the suffering should be acknowledged in words. Addressing what people are feeling and the challenges they face, builds trust and rapport.

DO

Promote Action

Giving people meaningful things to do calms anxiety, helps restore order, and promotes a restored sense of control.

DO

Show Respect

Respectful communication is particularly important when people feel vulnerable. Respectful communication promotes cooperation and rapport.



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Do's and Don'ts

DON'T

Be Caught Off Guard

Organizations without a crisis communication plan are usually slower to respond, unsure what to say, and unclear what role everyone plays.

DON'T

Have Ill-Prepared Leadership

Pair leaders with communication experts who can coach them on how to respond clearly, confidently, and empathetically.

DON'T

Take Too Long to Respond

Speed matters during a crisis. Organizations must respond quickly and with clear, factual information when a crisis strikes.

DON'T

Ignore Stakeholders

Companies that don't seek input from customers, partners, and communities might misjudge how people feel and communicate with them in ways that don't resonate or do harm.

DON'T

Forget About Employees

Don't focus so much on your external crisis response that you neglect employees.

DON'T

Continue "Business as Usual"

Act quickly once a crisis hits to review and adjust external marketing messages and scheduled communications.

