



Are You Ready To Handle A Crisis Today?

Take this into your next management meeting. It will identify the gaps in your readiness.

<p>1. What kind of management notification system do we have in place if a crisis occurs during non-business hours?</p> <p>a. For example, how long would it take to reach everyone on the Management team if we had a crisis at 3:00 p.m. on a Saturday?</p>
<p>2. What is our corporate emergency response plan like?</p> <p>a. When was it last updated?</p> <p>b. Has it ever been used or tested to see if it works?</p> <p>c. How well does it tie in with the response plans of our other sites (if applicable)?</p>
<p>3. What internal problems or other vulnerabilities do we have that could be damaging to our business if they went "public?"</p> <p>a. What would be the public reaction if one of them was disclosed by a disgruntled employee, or in a shareholder lawsuit, government investigation or probing news report?</p> <p>b. How would we respond to the situation and contain the impact on our company?</p> <p>c. What's being done to minimise the chances of that problem occurring?</p>
<p>4. Who would be our spokesperson(s) in a crisis?</p> <p>a. Who could step in if they were not available or not appropriate for that kind of crisis?</p> <p>b. How good would they be in handling tough questions from reporters? Have they been trained?</p> <p>c. How much confidence do we have that they will be credible and convincing?</p> <p>d. How would disclosures be handled at one of our facilities in a crisis? What Government bodies or other regulators would become involved?</p>
<p>5. How much information would we give out if we had a crisis?</p> <p>a. Who would decide what to say?</p> <p>b. What would be the approval process? How long would it take?</p> <p>c. Who do we have advising us?</p>
<p>6. How would we contact our management and employees so they would hear from us before learning about it from the news media?</p> <p>a. What about customers, suppliers and other key audiences?</p> <p>b. How would we do it, and how long would that take?</p>
<p>7. What crisis situations have similar organisations had that went "public?" How well would we have handled those crises?</p> <p>a. How much management time has it taken? How much has it cost them so far in expenses, lost business or other impacts?</p> <p>b. What are the prospects for lawsuits, government investigations, etc? How long will it be before they get the problem behind them?</p> <p>c. What can be learned from their experiences?</p> <p>d. Have we made any changes in the way we do business as a result of what happened to them?</p>

While no one can completely predict a crisis, appropriate planning can make the difference between maintaining a good corporate reputation and the possibility of permanent damage to your good name.