

## Crisis Communications

September 2019

A crisis can happen anytime. The resultant disorder can affect any organisation, and impact a wide range of partners. During such challenging times, crisis communications is critical - senior leaders and management will need to front public and media queries as a way to manage public sentiments and employees' morale. Having a crisis communications plan ready would allow immediate activation when a crisis happens. Here are tips to creating a crisis communications plan:

### 1. Specify the purpose and guidelines for the plan

### 2. Establish your Crisis Comms Org structure - Identify your crisis communications team and appoint relevant personnel including:



- A command centre coordinator to coordinate all responses to the crisis;
- A service representative to ensure scripted replies are disseminated to customer service team;
- A spokesperson to speak to the media;
- A media team to handle media queries, monitor news relevant to the crisis/ your company and prepare materials for media/spokespersons.

### 3. Make a list of your stakeholders details - Compile a contact list of the stakeholders you will need to reach out to in a crisis. This could include management, employees, customers, news media, government officials or regulators, as well as owners or shareholders.

### 4. Develop plans for a crisis command centre - Choose a crisis command centre so that your team can gather at one site to coordinate required responses. It would also be ideal if this space can be used to hold a press conference. The space should be centrally located and readily available on short notice. It should be equipped with:



- Lines of communication – landlines, internet connection, computers, copiers etc;
- Building diagram plans, pens, paper and white board.

### 5. Draft FAQs in advance - Think about questions that may arise and draft template answers to use during a crisis. For example, employees may ask if they should report to work or whether it is safe, news media may ask for the cause and statistics, customers may ask if they will be compensated for delays etc. This will help you issue responses quickly, which will provide your stakeholders with greater assurance.

### 6. Pay attention to your tone - When drafting replies and messages, ensure that the tone is appropriate and empathetic. Also, the response time of updates during crisis communications matters. Issue responses the soonest you can get facts confirmed, and provide media with a holding reply if more time is needed to gather facts.

### 7. Ensure consistent messaging - Information presented through all official communication channels should be consistent. Official communication channels include what is said during interviews with company spokesperson and what is presented on a company's website and social media platforms.

### Test your plan

Conduct a practice drill to run through the plan. Identify any weaknesses and revise the plan if needed.

### Distribute copies of the plan



Ensure that key personnel have a copy of updated crisis communication plans. Consider saving the plan on a secured server and limit access only to authorised personnel. Emphasise the importance of keeping it confidential as the plan incorporates stakeholders' details and key information to safeguard your business.



*"For us, it is always safety first. If we put in preparation efforts today, it can help us recover faster during crisis and reduce downtime."*

*– Mr Gideon Lam, Chief Executive Officer of Shalom Movers.*

Read about Shalom Movers' SGSecure plan [here](#).

**Have a story to share about how your workplace has taken measures to be prepared?**

**Write to us at [SGSecure\\_Workplaces@mom.gov.sg](mailto:SGSecure_Workplaces@mom.gov.sg)!**