



Steps to take when crisis hits:

1) Verify situation: Determine the magnitude of the event as quickly as possible. Checkpoints:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Get the facts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	What was the source of the information?
<input type="checkbox"/>	How credible is the information source?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Was information obtained from additional sources to put event into perspective?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the information consistent with other sources?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the characterization of the event plausible?
<input type="checkbox"/>	If necessary, was the information clarified through a subject information expert?
2) Conduct notifications: Contact and brief those within and outside your organization who need to know. Have the following been notified and briefed:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate persons in your organization (your core team, senior management group, communication team)?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Elected officials at all levels?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate local and county agencies?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate state agencies?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Appropriate federal agencies?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other relevant groups (board members, clients, residents, etc.)?
3) Assess level of crisis: Determine the degree and intensity of the event to determine the communication response? Checkpoints:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has a crisis level (A,B,C,D) been identified that corresponds to the event characteristics?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have the hours of operation for the communication team been established?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Has jurisdiction over information been established?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Were the specific audience concerns addressed?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Will federal agencies release information? or will states?
4) Organize assignments: activate your ERC plan. Checkpoints:	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Do all personnel understand their role and their immediate tasks?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Were specific assignments given to each team member?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have all experts/spokespeople been well-informed?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have all staff been briefed and prepared, in case they are approached by the media?





5) Prepare information and obtain approvals: Get agreement on the information content, develop it, and get it approved for release. Checkpoints:	
	Have you planned for a timely release?
	Has the accuracy of all information been checked?
	Does the message show compassion?
	Were the specific audience concerns addressed?
	Does the message meet the criteria of good message development?
	Have you anticipated media questions and developed answers?
	Has the message been cleared for release?
6) Release info to public: Decide on the frequency of information release, how it will be done, and who will speak. Checkpoints:	
	Have you released information as quickly as possible?
	Was the same information given to all media at the same time?
	Was the information released to other groups as planned? (partners, legislators, special interest groups, etc.)
	Was the information released through other channels as planned? (web, 800 #, mailings, meetings, etc.)
7) Monitor, maintain, and make adjustments for the remaining life of the crisis:	
	Are experts/spokespeople regularly updated and briefed?
	Is media coverage being monitored (to determine what messages are still needed, what misinformation needs correcting, and to identify concerns, interests, and needs arising from the crisis as it is being reported)?
	Are mechanisms in place to monitor audience feedback (e.g., public information call analysis)?
	Who is providing feedback to leadership?

Adapted from Centers for Disease Control, Emergency Risk Communication CDCynergy, 2003.

