

# Crisis Communication Planning Workbook



The material in this workbook draws from information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as part of their Crisis and Emergency Risk Communications program.

This workbook was supported through funding from Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to the Center for Biopreparedness Education and is **not for commercial use.**

# Table of Contents

---

Introduction .....	page 3
Assess the Crisis .....	page 4
Identify Audiences .....	page 8
Communication Materials .....	page 11
Communication Channels .....	page 15
Monitoring .....	page 20
Needed Resources .....	page 21
Post Event Evaluation .....	page 26
Make Sure the Plan Works as Intended.....	page 27
PIO Role in Incident Command .....	page 28
Final Checklists .....	page 29

# Introduction

---

Any project is easier if you have the right tools to do the job. This Workbook is intended to provide the basic information, checklists and worksheets to make developing a crisis communication plan easier. It's a tool not a rule book.

Make the templates or structure fit your needs. If all of the items on a checklist don't apply to your situation cross them off. If a worksheet needs to be adapted to better fit your organization, make the changes.

This Workbook outlines the basic elements of a Crisis Communication Plan. Each section briefly explains the "what" and "why" of that element. The tasks involved in developing part of the plan are identified by the "building block" icon. Each section



also contains the relevant tools to help get you started and keep your plan organized. Tips that will help you keep on track are noted with the "keys" icon.

Of course, the tools can be used on the fly during an actual event as well. *However*, our goal here is to develop a crisis communication plan that helps us avoid those risky and extra stressful seat-of-the-pants situations.

While this Workbook is focused on applying the principles of crisis communication, understanding the theory is still important. A theoretical foundation explains the rationale behind the elements of a crisis communication plan. If you haven't already done so, we recommend completing the CDC's course in Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication. It's available online at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/cerc/>

This Workbook is intended to help you identify audiences, messages, and channels of communication for different types of events your facility may face. While some details of the crisis communication plan may stay the same throughout (who your spokespeople will be, for example) other details will change depending on the type of event (content of the messages, for example).

The material in this Workbook draws heavily from materials provided by the CDC in their Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication training. While the emphasis in some of the materials is on public health, the basic concepts are the same and can be adapted to any field.

# Assess the Crisis

---

The first step in developing a Crisis Communication plan is to assess the magnitude of the events your organization faces and formulate a communication strategy to fit each situation. Not every situation requires the same level of communication or expenditure of resources.

It's critical to do a quick assessment to help predict the level of public information and media response that will be required.



In the planning phase, take a look at your facility's Hazard and Vulnerability Assessment. (If your facility doesn't have one, your local county emergency manager will have one for your area.) Or, look at the types of crisis situations that have happened most frequently or had the greatest impact in the past. The goal is to identify the crisis situations your organization faces.

For each type of event, use the Event Assessment Worksheet to score that event. Then use the score and the Event Response Matrix to identify the appropriate intensity of response for that event. This step will help you identify what resources you'll need, including personnel.

## Event Response Matrix and Assessment Worksheet (FOR USE DURING PRE-EVENT PHASE)

**Purpose:** The Event Response Matrix and Event Assessment Worksheet are tools to guide decisions about the communication response (hours of operation for a communications center, level of support, etc.) according to the event's crisis level and intensity score. When used for pre-event planning, it facilitates decision-making about the resources and materials needed for an actual event.

### Instructions

- 1) Using the "Event Assessment Worksheet",
  - briefly describe the event;
  - review each event criteria in Column C;
  - check the boxes in Column A for those criteria that apply to this event.
- 2) For each box checked in Column A, add the intensity points listed in Column B to derive the final intensity score for this event.
- 3) Record the total intensity points in the space provided on the worksheet.
- 4) Based on information given for pre-event scenario planning, use this intensity score to rank anticipated events with each other in order of priority for resource utilization and materials development.

Notes:

**This matrix and worksheet is meant to be used as a general guide** and tool for generating discussion about response and resources during the pre-event planning phase.

**The worksheet is meant to take only a few minutes to complete.** Do not spend a lot of time considering whether or not to check a box in Column A of the worksheet.

Your ultimate goal is to be able to anticipate the longevity of the initial phase of the crisis and the need for long-term maintenance and follow-up from a communication perspective. This tool will help you to do this based on the identification of a "crisis level". Ultimately what resources are needed for public information and media relations, your staffing, and hours of operation are all affected by the intensity and longevity of the emergency or crisis.

## EVENT ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Brief description of event:

Item #	Column A Check if applicable	Column B Criteria Intensity (0–8)	Column C Crisis Criteria
1	<input type="checkbox"/>	8	The initial event is clearly recognized as a public health emergency that requires immediate communication with the public to prevent further widespread illness or death.
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Deaths are expected within a short window of time (catastrophic event). Diagnosis and/or treatment are uncertain.
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	The media and public perceive the event as the “first,” “worst,” or “biggest,” etc.
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Deaths are expected well above normal levels.
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	The event is occurring in a metropolitan area (with dense media outlets) versus a sparsely populated area (with fewer media outlets).
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	The event is sudden, is national in scope, or has the potential to have a national health impact.
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	The government is perceived as a cause of or responsible for the event.
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	The event predominantly impacts children or previously healthy adults.
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	The event is possibly “man-made” and/or deliberate.
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Controlling the event may require a suspension of civil rights for a significant portion of the population.
11	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Persons involved in the event must take active steps to protect their personal health and safety.
12	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Responsibility for mitigating the event falls within the scope of your organization.
13	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	The event has some “exotic” aspect.
14	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	A well-known product, service, or industry is involved.
15	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Sensitive international trade or political relations are involved.
16	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	A well-known “celebrity” is involved.
17	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	An ongoing criminal investigation is involved.
18	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	The disease or public health issue is not well understood by the general population, or the general population is misinformed about the situation.
19	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	The event is “acute.” The event occurred and your organization is faced with explaining the event and the aftermath (e.g., an accident in the laboratory or a chemical release).
20	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	The long-term health effects for humans involved in the event are uncertain.
21	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	The event is evolving. Its progression is uncertain and may become more or less serious (e.g., identification of a novel influenza virus).
22	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	The event site does not have a well-equipped and resourced public information response capability.
23	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	The event occurred internationally with little chance of affecting the U.S. population.
24	<input type="checkbox"/>	0	Treatment or control of exposure is generally understood and within the person’s control.

**Total Intensity Points:**

**Crisis Level:**

- (A) – Highly Intense  
 (B) – Intense

- (C) – Moderately Intense  
 (D) – Minimally Intense

## EVENT RESPONSE MATRIX

Event Evaluation Factors			
Crisis Level	Crisis Description	Crisis Criteria	Recommended Outcome*
<b>A</b>	<b>Highly intense in the initial phase.</b> The need to disseminate information rapidly to the public and media is critical. Life and limb will be at risk if the public is not notified about the risk and public health recommendations.	<i>Item #1 must be checked. From among Items #2, 3, and 4, at least two <u>must</u> be checked.</i>	Operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for media and public response, with an expectation that relief and replacement staff will be needed. Per your plan, form or join a Joint Information Center (JIC).
<b>B</b>	<b>Intense.</b> The need to directly provide public health recommendations to the public and media to save life or limb is not immediate. The public and media, however, believe their health and safety are or could soon be at risk. There is a high and growing demand for more information.	<i>Item #1 <u>not</u> checked, and Item #3 and 4 boxes checked.</i>	Operate 20 hours a day, 7 days a week during the initial phase. Set up routine times for media briefings, allow public to e-mail or leave phone messages during nonduty times, and move into maintenance phase when possible. Be prepared to face “initial phase” demands, depending on developments during the maintenance phase (maintenance phases with bumps). May need to form a JIC.
<b>C</b>	<b>Moderately intense.</b> Media frenzy develops. Interest is generated because of the event novelty versus a legitimate and widespread or immediate public health concern. Interest could die suddenly if a “real” crisis occurred.	<i>Item #3 checked, and Items # 1, 2 and 4 <u>not</u> checked. Three or more of the Criteria Intensity 2 boxes checked, and one or more of the Criteria Intensity 3 boxes checked.</i>	Operate 10–12 hours a day, 5–6 days a week and assign a single team member for after-hour purposes during the initial phase. Operate on weekend if event occurs on a weekend; otherwise use on-call staff only on weekends, not during full operation. Attempt to move the media and public to maintenance phases with prescribed times and outlets for updates. No need to form a JIC.
<b>D</b>	<b>Minimally intense.</b> Builds slowly and may continue for weeks, depending on the outcome of further investigation. Requires monitoring and reassessments.	<i>Items #1, 2, and 3 not checked. More Criteria Intensity 1 or Criteria Intensity 2 boxes checked than Criteria Intensity 3 boxes.</i>	Operate normally in the initial phase while preparing to move to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, if needed. Notify relief and replacement staff that they may be called for duty depending on how the event develops. Do not “burn out” staff with long hours before the public and media demand escalates. Practice your crisis communication operations (during normal duty hours) to ensure the system works. Consider operating a JIC if information release is shared.

# Identify Audiences

---

You'll need to communicate with several different audiences. Who they will be will vary depending on the event. We can think of these audiences in three tiers:

- **Tier 1** – These people are most affected by the event or involved in the response and will need information that enables them to take immediate action.
- **Tier 2** – These people are not immediately affected by the event but will need information about safety and the facts of the event.
- **Tier 3** – These people are not affected by the event but still need information that will provide reassurance and enable them to plan for their own safety.

Correctly identifying your audience(s) will ensure that you choose the best method(s) of communication to reach a particular audience.

Each of these audiences will be looking for a specific message. Prioritize the development of messages for each audience based on their involvement.



For each event you identified in the “Assess the Crisis” step, identify the audiences for each Tier. On the Message Planning Worksheet, note the event (use a separate sheet for each event) and list the audiences you’ve identified in the “Audience” column. It’s better to brainstorm and be generous in identifying possible audiences now rather than realizing during the midst of a crisis that a key group was overlooked.

Possible audiences for your crisis and emergency risk communication:

- Public for whom action messages are intended (those most affected by the event)
- Public for whom action messages are not intended (those not immediately affected by the event but who still need information)
- Emergency response and recovery workers, law enforcement involved in the response
- Public health and medical professionals involved in the response
- Family members of victims and response workers
- Stakeholders and partners specific to the emergency
- Health care professionals outside the response effort
- Civic leaders, local, state, and national
- Media
- Special populations

You'll be filling out the other columns as you go further along in the planning process.



In order not to get too overwhelmed at this point, consider starting with an event that you graded as an “A” Crisis Level in the Assess the Crisis step of the process. And remember you'll be able to reuse pieces of the plan for one type of event in your plans for other types of events. It won't be necessary to “reinvent the wheel” for every event you're dealing with.

## *Audiences - Additional Considerations*

### **Special Populations**

Special populations include people that may have hearing, vision, speech, cognitive, or intellectual limitations as well as limited proficiency in English. In order to make your messages easily accessible to these groups, you'll need to identify them early on in the planning process.

As you develop your plan, you'll want to get input from those in your community that work closely with these groups. You'll also want to make advance arrangements for interpreters, sign language assistants or others to be available during the event if needed.

### **Media**

During an event, the media can be strong allies in getting your messages out quickly and accurately – if you take the time in advance to understand their role and develop strong relationships with them. Make every effort to accommodate their deadlines by answering requests for information as quickly as possible. For media outlets online, web deadlines can be minutes rather than hours.

During a crisis, be available to help reporters get the facts and get them right, before deadline. Depending on the magnitude of the event, this may mean designating a specific person within the PIO function dedicated to working with the media.

Let the media know when new information will be provided. Establish a schedule for information releases. These information releases can be postings to a web site or a blog or press conferences where reporters have an opportunity to ask questions. Provide all media with the same access at the same time. Give the same information to all media all the time. Don't play favorites. The key is to have consistent information flowing back and forth between the official response levels.

You must expect the possibility of the following from media during the early moments of a crisis because they're operating in a "not business as usual" mode just as you are:

- Diminished information verification
- Diminished adversarial role
- For major crises, expect the national media to dominate
- Media will expect an Emergency Operations Center/Command Center (EOC/CC)
- Inadequate scientific expertise

Be aware that the media does have the legal right to have access to whatever the general public has access to. And once they have information, they have a right to use it in any way they see fit (as long as they're not committing slander or libel). Our best recourse in managing the media is to build good relationships before a crisis occurs and to understand the role the media plays during a crisis.

At the same time, recognize that what is a crisis to you may not be considered newsworthy by the media. They are not obligated to report on an event. This is particularly true if there is no local media in your area and you are relying on regional media outlets.

**MESSAGE PLANNING WORKSHEET**  
Event/Scenario - \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Key Message</b>	<b>Supporting Facts</b>	<b>Communication Channel</b>

# Communication Materials

---

It's important to keep in mind that during a crisis, people take in information differently, process it differently, and act on it differently than they do during normal times. People have a kind of selective hearing and they latch onto the information that makes the most sense to them.

You'll remember from speech class in school that people filter what they hear through their beliefs, values, behavioral patterns and current physical and emotional states. Communication doesn't take place until the recipient filters and decodes the message.



In other words, communication takes place in the mind of the receiver. During a crisis, the current physical and emotional state of our audience is key.

For those reasons, it's important to think carefully about the messages we're going to deliver during a crisis. Obviously, events don't unfold neatly according to plan so we can't pre-write detailed messages. However we can develop generic messages that can be used in different situations. We can also develop message templates with "fill in the blanks" that can be completed quickly during an event. And we can prepare in advance fact sheets or other informational materials and have them ready to go.

The goal of our messages and communication materials is to impart information so people can make decisions or take appropriate action as well as to establish trust and build the credibility of our organization.

Don't hold back information or down play the seriousness of the situation for fear of creating panic. Experts that study behavior during disasters tell us that people don't usually panic unless they feel trapped and helpless. Well thought through messages delivered effectively are more likely to dispel panic than create it.

Every emergency, disaster, or crisis evolves in phases and communication must evolve in tandem. By dividing the crisis into phases, we can anticipate the information needs of the media, stakeholders, and the general public.

Each phase has its unique informational requirement. The movement through each of the phases will vary according to the triggering event. Not all crises are created equally. The degree or intensity and longevity of a crisis will impact required resources and staff.

The following chart outlines the Crisis Communication Life Cycle and identifies typical information needs.

## Crisis Communication Life Cycle

	Pre-Crisis	Initial	Maintenance	Resolution	Evaluation
<b>Typical questions people will ask</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happened?</li> <li>• Where and when?</li> <li>• Who's responsible?</li> <li>• Who's to blame?</li> <li>• Are we safe?</li> <li>• What's the danger to myself and my family</li> <li>• What's being done to protect or help people?</li> <li>• Is anyone hurt? Sick? Dead?</li> <li>• Who are they?</li> <li>• What are you going to do about it?</li> <li>• Who's in charge?</li> <li>• What's going to happen next?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What's the risk to me?</li> <li>• What can I do to minimize my risk?</li> <li>• What should/can I do to help?</li> <li>• Why are you doing what you're doing?</li> <li>• Why aren't you doing more/differently?</li> <li>• Who should I listen to? Who's right?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why didn't the response go better/differently?</li> <li>• Who's responsible for getting us back to normal?</li> <li>• Why is it taking so long to _____?</li> <li>• I'm not seeing this on the news anymore. Should I still care?</li> </ul>	
<b>Our information goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify audiences.</li> <li>• Develop generic messages and materials.</li> <li>• Identify channels of communication.</li> <li>• Exercise the plan to make sure it works.</li> <li>• Get buy-in and approvals from legal, management.</li> <li>• Build relationships with audiences and media now.</li> <li>• Identify and train spokespeople.</li> <li>• Make sure employees know what to do if they're approached by the media.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledge the event with empathy</li> <li>• Explain and inform in simple terms about the risk</li> <li>• Establish your credibility</li> <li>• Provide appropriate courses of action (including where and how to get more information)</li> <li>• Commit to stakeholders to continued communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help appropriate people more accurately understand the impact of the situation and their risk</li> <li>• Provide background and encompassing information to those who need to know</li> <li>• Gain understanding of and support for response</li> <li>• Monitor what's being said by whom and correct misinformation</li> <li>• Explain emergency recommendations (if any)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve future response by providing education about this response</li> <li>• Honestly examine problems and mishaps</li> <li>• Reinforce what worked</li> <li>• Persuade/build support for policy and resource allocation changes</li> <li>• Promote the activities and capabilities of your facility/agency.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Debrief and evaluate how the plan worked.</li> <li>• Document the response as part of an After Action Report.</li> <li>• Take the opportunity to grow by developing an improvement plan to address training and exercise needs</li> <li>• Revise the plan to incorporate changes based on lessons learned.</li> </ul>



Now we're ready to start writing generic messages and developing message templates. On the Message Planning Worksheet for one of the events you've identified, look at the first audience you've identified. Now take a look at the Initial Phase column on the Crisis Communication Life Cycle chart. Use the typical questions people ask and our information goals to draft a short generic message you could use in the initial phase of that event.

We want to keep our messages clear, direct and simple by:

- Making no more than 3 key points
- Use clear, direct language
- Avoiding jargon or technical terms

Here's an example. XYZ Community Hospital has identified the need to evacuate outside the facility as a high impact event. The first audience identified is staff. The initial message might look something like this.

Because \_\_\_\_\_ happened, it's necessary to evacuate \_\_\_\_\_ . A temporary command center has been established in the administrator's conference room. All staff not already assigned a response role are asked to report to the labor pool supervisor stationed \_\_\_\_\_ to be assigned duties in the evacuation effort.

(If this is an event, like a tornado, that has impacted the community, include the following in the message: information about how and when to reach family members to ensure that they're safe.)

In this example, the blanks can't be filled in until the event happens. Note that the message is short and to the point. Also note that the message acknowledges that staff members are going to be asking the same questions about what happened and are they and their loved ones safe.

It's not quantum physics but crafting messages does require time to think things through. Which is exactly why we don't want to wait until we're in the middle of responding to a crisis to try and figure out what we should be saying to whom.

A couple of things to note:



- 1) You'll be able to use the same message for multiple audiences so don't tie yourself into knots trying to come up with something new for each audience. One message may be enough or one message with a few tweaks may do the trick.
- 2) You can either develop messages based on the type of event such as tornado or flood, OR you can develop messages based on the outcome of the event such as having to evacuate or loss of power. Whichever way works best for you and your communications team is the "right" way to do this step.



You're probably noticing that the Message Planning Worksheet also has a column titled "Supporting Facts". Use this column to note supporting information that may be needed to provide more in-depth information in response to questions.

For example if our message for a pandemic influenza scenario is to wash your hands, cover your cough and stay home if you're sick, we could note in the "Supporting Facts" column more detailed information on how influenza virus is spread or how surfaces can be contaminated. In this case, our Message Planning Worksheet might look something like this:

MESSAGE PLANNING WORKSHEET			
Event/Scenario - <u>Pandemic Influenza</u>			
Audience	Key Message	Supporting Facts	Communication Channel
Staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wash your hands frequently or use the alcohol based hand sanitizers available throughout the building.</li> <li>2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the crook of your elbow when you cough or sneeze.</li> <li>3. If you're experiencing symptoms of the flu (fever, coughing, etc), please stay home to avoid infecting others.</li> </ol>	<p>Handwashing reduces transmission of the virus from contaminated surfaces.</p> <p>The virus is spread in droplet form.</p> <p>Peak shedding occurs during the first 3 days of illness.</p>	



In addition to messages, you'll also want to think about other information to have ready, for example FAQs or informational flyers. Work on gathering or developing those materials now. Identify other sources of information where you may want to direct people.



It's normal to feel pretty overwhelmed at this point. The key to working through this part of the plan lies in that old joke – how do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time!

Break the work into sections by setting aside time to tackle one event/scenario at a time, one audience at a time. Reuse messages as much as possible. And use the worksheets as a tool or guideline, not a rule book.



As you develop messages, have others – ideally members of the audience you've intended the messages for – review the messages to make sure they are clear and direct.

# Communication Channels

Achieving effective communication with your audiences depends on selecting methods of communication that will reach them. The most well crafted message won't do any good if it doesn't reach the intended audience.

When we think about communication channels, we typically think first of traditional media like newspapers, television, radio or websites. The crisis communicator's tool box includes many communication channels including:

- Face-to-face meeting
- Group delivery (town hall meetings)
- Organizational meetings
- Mass media
- Printed materials
- Community meetings
- Social networking media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook)
- Combination of any or all of these

When we're deciding what channels to use, we need to ask:

- Which channels are most appropriate for our message?
- Which channels will the target audience find credible AND accessible?
- Which channels and how many channels are feasible, considering schedule and budget?



Take a look at the Message Planning Worksheets you've developed. Using the list of possible communication channels as a starting point for each audience identify the most appropriate and realistic communication channel to deliver that message to that audience. Remember that you will most likely use the same communication channel to deliver messages to several

audiences.

Using our previous example of Pandemic Influenza, our Message Planning Worksheet might look something like this after this step in the process.

MESSAGE PLANNING WORKSHEET			
Event/Scenario - <u>Pandemic Influenza</u>			
Audience	Key Message	Supporting Facts	Communication Channel
Staff	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wash your hands frequently or use the alcohol based hand sanitizers available throughout the building.</li> <li>2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the crook of your elbow when you cough or sneeze.</li> <li>3. If you're experiencing symptoms of the flu (fever, coughing, etc), please stay home to avoid infecting others.</li> </ol>	<p>Handwashing reduces transmission of the virus from contaminated surfaces.</p> <p>The virus is spread in droplet form.</p> <p>Peak shedding occurs during the first 3 days of illness.</p>	<p>Flyers posted in employee lounge, employee bulletin boards, and restrooms.</p> <p>Verbal reminders at staff meetings.</p>
General Public	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Wash your hands frequently or use alcohol based hand sanitizers.</li> <li>2. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the crook of your elbow when you cough or sneeze.</li> <li>3. If you're experiencing symptoms of the flu (fever, coughing, etc), please stay home to avoid infecting others.</li> </ol>	<p>Handwashing reduces transmission of the virus from contaminated surfaces.</p> <p>The virus is spread in droplet form so using good cough etiquette helps reduce the spread of disease.</p> <p>You're contagious for as much as three days after you become ill.</p>	<p>Flyers posted in stores and other public places.</p> <p>Informational pieces included as "stuffers" in local newspaper (may get this service donated)</p> <p>Demonstrations of proper hand washing and cough etiquette for local elementary school teachers asking them to share with their students.</p>

## *Communication Channels – Additional Considerations*

### **Spokespersons**

The spokesperson brings the organization to life. He or she literally embodies the organization and gives it its human identity. A good spokesperson has the ability to *effectively* connect with an audience. A spokesperson doesn't just read a statement, they *are* the statement.

The spokesperson may or may not be the person preparing the message.

A good spokesperson is important in order to establish credibility for your organization. Attitude and non-verbal messages are also important. The spokesperson need to be able to remain calm, attentive, and polite with a relaxed and neutral physical stance. Good spokespersons don't let their feelings interfere with their ability to communicate positively.

Make sure training is provided for the people you've identified as possible spokespersons. It's hard to remain calm and attentive in emotionally charged situations. Training and practice are needed.

General recommendations for spokespersons in all settings:

- Know your organization's policies about the release of information
- Stay within the scope of your responsibilities, unless you are authorized to speak for the entire organization or a higher headquarters
- Don't answer questions that are not within the scope of your organizational responsibility
- Tell the truth and be as open as possible
- Follow up on issues
- Use visuals when possible

Do's and Don'ts:

- Do remember that jargon will confuse people and implies arrogance
- Do refute negative allegations without repeating them
- Do use positive or neutral terms, when possible
- Don't assume you've made your point
- Don't use one-liners, clichés, and off-the-cuff comments
- Do discuss what you know, not what you think
- Don't express personal opinions
- Don't show off

**Possible Communication Channels** (listed in no particular order)

Type	Benefits	Limitations
<p><b>Phone Bank –</b> Usually employs a toll-free number people can call with questions or to get information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows monitoring of questions and concerns. Information can be used to develop other communications.</li> <li>• Allows two-way interaction with the community</li> <li>• Provides a mechanism for the community to have their questions answered quickly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be resource intensive especially if many people are needed to handle the call volume</li> <li>• Training is needed for those answering the phone so they to understand their role and constraints</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Networking (Twitter, Face Book, My Space, etc) –</b> Also known as social media, these electronic communication media are increasing in popularity and can be a way to provide up-to-the- minute information quickly at a relatively low cost.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twitter provides an easy way to provide information quickly to a specific audience</li> <li>• Social networking sites allow you to reach a large number of people quickly at a low cost</li> <li>• Allows monitoring of questions and concerns</li> <li>• Allows two-way interaction with the audience</li> <li>• Let’s you target and control the message</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Twitter allows only very brief messages</li> <li>• People must sign up to receive your messages</li> <li>• Need to be using social networking to reach audiences before a crisis arises because if they’re not aware or uncomfortable using this technology, they won’t take the time during a crisis situation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Websites –</b> A low cost way to distribute messages fairly easily. The home page can be used to post updated information or links and event specific pages can be developed in advance and activated when needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows information to be updated easily</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally doesn’t allow two way interactions unless an option to ask questions by email is provided. In that case, dedicated staff may be required to handle the volume of email.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Blogs –</b> These popular online communication tools serve as a kind of newsletter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows information to be updated easily</li> <li>• Allows two-way interaction with the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to be using blogs to reach audiences before a crisis arises because if they’re not aware or uncomfortable using this technology, they won’t take the time during a crisis situation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Push technology (like Reverse 911) –</b> In use by many school systems, recorded messages are “pushed” to recipients.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaches many people quickly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn’t allow two-way interaction so the messages need to include instructions on how to have their questions answered</li> <li>• Will require advance negotiations and/or Mutual Aid agreement with the agency owning the system (e.g. schools)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Traditional Media: TV, Radio, Newspapers –</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaches many people quickly</li> <li>• Traditional media are familiar communication vehicles for most people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You forfeit control of the message to some degree. Media outlets may edit your message to fit their space or time limitations.</li> <li>• There is no guarantee that media outlets will consider your message to be “newsworthy”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Flyer -</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective in briefly summarizing facts and issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a one-way communication tool</li> </ul>

<p>a brief report summarizing current or proposed activities. Flyers are appropriate whenever new information is available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides background for information discussed during a meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires careful writing and coordination between making technical information easy to understand and message delivery</li> </ul>
<p><b>Briefings -</b> sessions with key state and local officials, media representatives, and community leaders conducted by agency staff. Used to notify of developments related to the response or to introduce your organization and explain its role and work process.  Briefings are not usually open to the general public.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows state and local officials, the media, and citizens to question your organization directly about an activity before the public release of information</li> <li>• Prepares officials and citizen leaders to answer questions from their constituents when the information becomes public</li> <li>• Allows for exchange of information and concerns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May become the only means of communicating with site communities. Briefings should always be complemented by activities to inform the general public, such as small group or public meetings</li> <li>• Negative feelings or bad publicity could result if some people believe that they should be invited to the briefing and are not. Be sure not to exclude such persons or convey favoritism toward certain parties</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community mailings -</b> sends information to key contacts and concerned or involved members of the community. It disseminates information quickly and easily in writing, and it is particularly useful when you have updates for the community. If the updates are straightforward, noncontroversial, and easy to understand, the mailing can stand on its own. However, if the updates are more complicated and require a discussion or further explanation, the mailing should augment a public meeting or small group meetings. The community mailing can announce upcoming meetings and provide advance information or serve as a follow-up for people who did not attend previous meetings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enables you to deliver information quickly and may require less planning time than conducting a meeting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows no interaction or opportunity for community members to ask questions</li> <li>• Expensive</li> <li>• May experience problems getting current addresses of those you're trying to reach</li> </ul>
<p><b>Newsletters -</b> a publication that informs community members about activities, findings, health precautions, and other information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explains your work and findings to the community</li> <li>• Allows you to deliver a written document that community members can keep and refer to later</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can backfire if community members do not understand or are angered by what you have written</li> <li>• Does not give community members the opportunity to ask questions</li> <li>• Time consuming to prepare</li> <li>• Expensive</li> </ul>
<p><b>Presentations -</b> can be a speech to a club, civic or church organization, school class, or similar local audience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offers the audience a chance to ask questions so the agency can gauge community concerns</li> <li>• Reaches many people simultaneously, reducing individual inquiries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If poorly presented, can distort community members' view of the situation</li> <li>• Can only address individual community concerns during a question-and-answer period following the rehearsed</li> </ul>

		<p>presentation; could try people's patience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The presenter may face difficult or argumentative questions from community members</li> </ul>
<p><b>Public meetings -</b> large meeting open to the public, where experts present information and answer questions, and community members ask questions and offer comments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows the community to express concerns and the agency to present information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can intensify conflicts rather than resolve controversies. If public meetings have failed in the past, use an alternative method to transmit information and obtain feedback</li> </ul>
<p><b>Small group meetings -</b> agency staff shares information with interested community members and state and local officials. It is especially useful for informing and keeping in touch with community concerns, answering questions, and clearing up any misconceptions or misunderstandings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows two-way interaction with the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May require a day or more of staff time to reach only a few citizens</li> <li>• May be perceived by community groups as an effort to limit attendance or a tactic to prevent large groups from exerting influence</li> <li>• Irrate groups or individuals may accuse your organization's staff of giving different information to different groups</li> </ul>
<p><b>Open houses -</b> an informal meeting where community members can talk to agency staff one-on-one. It is most appropriate when key milestones or major decisions have been reached.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows for one-on-one conversation</li> <li>• Helps build trust and establishes a rapport between community members and agency staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can require significant staff time for planning and conducting an open house—a low turnout may not justify the effort</li> </ul>
<p><b>Exhibits -</b> visual displays of maps, charts, diagrams, or photographs. Effective exhibits can make technical information accessible and understandable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stimulates public interest and understanding</li> <li>• Creates visual impact and leaves a lasting impression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exhibits are a one-way communication tool and do not provide an opportunity for community feedback</li> </ul>

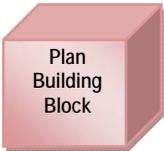
# Monitoring

---

During an event, it's not enough to disseminate messages. We also need to monitor what's being reported and what's being said or asked by our target audiences.

Paying attention to what's being reported in the media or disseminated via the web through websites, blogs, etc allows us to spot rumors or misinformation and act to correct it before things get too far out of hand. Paying attention to what the people we're trying to reach are saying or asking gives us an opportunity to clarify or expand our messages.

Monitoring can be as simple as reading through call logs from your phone bank to see what kinds of questions people are asking or as complex as having a dedicated person monitoring television, radio and web-based news reports. The level of monitoring required will depend on the magnitude of the event and the type and number of audiences with whom we're communicating.



Take a look at the different events identified during the message planning step of this process. For each event, write a brief paragraph describing how you will monitor information during the event. This paragraph will serve as the communication monitoring protocol for your plan. It's possible you'll use the same protocol for many of the events you've identified.

# Needed Resources

---

Identifying and arranging for resources in advance of an event makes it easier to respond quickly. Those initial messages set the tone for communication during the rest of the event so having to wait until a computer is set up or phone line activated can be disastrous.



Using the Crisis Communication / PIO Resources Worksheet as a guide, develop a list of the resources you will need to communicate effectively during events. You will probably not need the same level of resources for each event and the Worksheet will prove helpful in identifying what you'll need and when.

Verify that these resources will be available and will be activated quickly when you need them. Make arrangements now if necessary.

### Crisis Communication / PIO Resources Worksheet

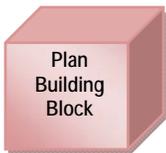
Resources	Source / Location	Event(s) requiring this resource				
		Event:	Event:	Event:	Event:	Event:
Staffing	See Staffing Plan worksheet					
A/V equipment						
CD-ROM						
Cell phones/pagers/personal data devices and e-mail readers						
Color copier						
Computers (w/LAN and email access)						
Designated personal message board						
Fax machine (number that's pre-programmed for broadcast fax releases to media and partners)						
Laptop computers						
Media Briefing Area						
Paper						
Paper shredder						
Phone Bank Volunteers						
Phone Lines						
Phone bridge lines for media and stakeholders						
Podium						
Portable microphones						
Printers for every computer						
Radio						
Tables						
TVs with cable hookup						
VHS VCR						
Visible calendars, flow charts, bulletin boards, easels						
Web site capability 24/7. Attempt to have new information posted within 2 hours (some say within 10 minutes).						

<p><b>Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper clips (all sizes)</li> <li>• Printer ink &amp; Copier toner</li> <li>• Paper</li> <li>• Pens</li> <li>• Markers</li> <li>• Highlighters</li> <li>• Erasable markers</li> <li>• Overnight mail supplies</li> <li>• Sticky notes</li> <li>• Tape (be creative)</li> <li>• Notebooks</li> <li>• Poster board</li> <li>• Standard press kit folders</li> <li>• Stock photos on DVD</li> <li>• Bios of spokespersons</li> <li>• Formatted computer disks</li> <li>• Color-coded everything (folders, inks, etc.)</li> <li>• Baskets (to contain items you're not ready to throw away)</li> <li>• Organizers to support your clearance and release system</li> <li>• Expandable folders (with alphabet or days of the month)</li> <li>• Staplers (lots of them)</li> <li>• Paper punch</li> <li>• Three-ring binders</li> <li>• Organization's press kit or its logo on a sticker</li> <li>• Colored copier paper (for door-to-door flyers)</li> </ul>						
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

## Needed Resources – Additional Considerations

### Volunteers

If you'll be using volunteers, for example to staff a phone bank, make sure you have identified how you're going to secure the number of people you'll need. Also make sure you've developed just-in-time training materials to use when you need them or provide training for those volunteers in advance.



For each event you've identified, decide whether or not you'll be using volunteers during the event. If you will be, write a brief paragraph describing how you will secure them, where they will come from (community organization or your own volunteer pool), how they will be activated, and training materials to be used. This paragraph will serve as the volunteer activation and use protocol for your plan.

### Staffing



The Staff Planning Worksheet will help you identify components of the crisis communication function during a response as well as provide a place to collect contact information and identify training needs.

The staff you identify on this worksheet may also perform tasks within other functional areas of the response. For example under the "Clearance" component, you would likely identify the Incident Commander or Agency Executive as a potential staff member because you would want them to sign off on any communications developed during the event. (Of course, you'll already have approval for the generic messages and message templates you've developed!)

When identifying staff to help with the communication/PIO role, think in terms of skill sets rather than day-to-day job duties. With a little training, a records clerk with strong written communication skills could be just the person to help write messages during an event. As you're filling out the Staff Planning Worksheet, think about what qualifications and skill set(s) would be appropriate for each function.

And remember that not all functions may be relevant to every event or to your organization. For example, "Government Communications" may not apply to you.

You're also going to want to provide training for the people you identify in this step of the process.



It's a good idea to go at least "2 to 3 deep" for each function, that is have at least two to three people trained and ready to go for each function. That way you won't get caught short if someone isn't available and if the response continues for more than a few hours, you'll have enough replacements to work in shifts.

### Staffing Planning Worksheet

Function	Qualifications/Skill Sets	# of Staff Needed	Potential Staff Member (Contact Information)	Training Needed? Completed?
Leadership (PIO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decision making authority</li> <li>Management skills</li> <li>Spokesperson skills</li> </ul>			
Clearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Authority to clear messages for release</li> </ul>			
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Message development</li> <li>Strong written and verbal communication skills</li> </ul>			
Clinician Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge of clinician environment</li> <li>Analytical Skills</li> </ul>			
Communication Monitoring and Research				
Government Communications				
Hotline/Phone Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-lingual</li> </ul>			
Media				
Web/Online Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Familiarity with organization website</li> <li>Working knowledge of social media technology (Twitter, etc)</li> </ul>			
Spokespersons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to remain calm under fire</li> </ul>			

# Post Event Evaluation

---

Every event gives us an opportunity to apply lessons learned. What worked well? What could have gone better?

When the event is over, we want to include crisis communication in the after action debriefing and report.



Write a brief description describing how post event evaluation will be handled as it applies to crisis communication. How will lessons learned be documented in the After Action Report and included specific actions to improve the response or plan in the Improvement Plan. This paragraph will serve as the post event evaluation protocol for your plan.

Things to evaluate include (but not limited to):

- Were the messages received and interpreted in the way we intended?
- Did the channels of communication we use worked as we expected?
- Did we effectively monitor the situation and were we able to adapt our response as needed?



Chances are that the crisis communication role won't end when the rest of the response ends. The resolution phase of the crisis communication life cycle may extend well beyond the time when everyone else has packed up and gone home.

We need to be prepared to continue honestly acknowledging missteps and reinforcing what worked in the response as well as promoting the activities and capabilities of the organization. If appropriate, we'll also want to take this opportunity to build support for policy and resource allocation changes both internally and within the community.

Keep the possibility of an extended communication response in mind as you work on the plan.

# Make Sure the Plan Works as Intended

---



The most well developed plan is only as good as people’s ability to implement it. So it’s vital to orient the appropriate people to the plan. Whether you use brief meetings, articles in your organization’s newsletter, bulletin board postings, regular email updates, or some other method, find a method or combination of methods that work for your organization. The regularly keep people informed.

Test the plan to make sure things will work as expected. There are many options for testing – tabletop exercises, drills, inclusion in full-scale exercises, as well as asking members of the targeted audiences to review and provide feedback on your communication materials and/or communication channels. You can test communication channels by using those same channels for non-crisis messages and monitoring the results.

Some objectives for testing our crisis communication plan might include:

- All audiences that will be impacted by or that will need to receive information about this event are identified
- Messages prompt members of the target audiences to take the desired actions. (This can include having a better understanding of the situation as well as performing specific behaviors.)
- The communication channels we’ve identified reach the target audience.
- Resources needed to execute the crisis communication plan are available as they are needed.

# PIO Role in Incident Command

---

The Public Information Officer (PIO) is a position with the Command Staff section of Incident Command System. They answer to the Incident Commander.

The PIO oversees communication about the event both outside the organization (general public, media, stakeholders, etc) and inside the organization (staff not involved in the response, patients and their families, etc). They work closely with other members of the Command Staff and the Section Chiefs within the General Staff.

The PIO's responsibilities include:

- Gathering and verifying relevant information from members of the incident management team in the Command Center.
- Overseeing development of messages and identifying appropriate communication channels
- Developing and maintaining a media contact list
- Oversee handling of media requests
- Selecting and prepping appropriate team members for interviews
- Overseeing the escort of media representatives and VIPs throughout the operational area

The PIO role is not for the faint of heart. They must be able to work well under pressure and think on their feet. They need to have strong organizational and management skills. They need to communicate with a effective and professional demeanor and have strong verbal skills.

The PIO role is about more than just sending out information or dealing with the media. It's all about communicating effectively during an event. Effective communication not only minimizes loss of life and property; it can also determine how quickly your organization recovers.

FEMA offers both on-site and online classes in emergency management. For more information visit <http://training.fema.gov/EMICourses/>

# Final Checklists

---

Now that you've worked through all of the elements of a crisis communication plan, here's a final checklist to use in reviewing what you've done. Remember if something on the list doesn't apply to your organization, cross it off.

This list is drawn from the CDC's CERC Assessment Tool and is offered here in the same order as prepared by the CDC. (Available online at <http://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/CEROnline/index.html> - you have to click through the first few screens to get to the Tools section.)

Yes	No	<b>Planning, research, training and evaluation</b>
		Does your plan have the following elements:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated line and staff responsibilities for the public information team</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information verification and clearance/approval procedures</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreements on information release authorities (who releases what/when/how)</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional and local media contact list (including after-hours news desks)</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures to coordinate with your organization’s response teams (if applicable)</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designated spokespersons</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact numbers for emergency information partners (e.g. Mayor’s office, Governor’s public affairs officer, local FBI public information special agent in charge, local or regional department of agriculture or veterinarian public information officers, Red Cross and other nongovernment organizations)</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After hours contact numbers for your organization’s response team (if applicable)</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreements/procedures to join the joint information center of the emergency operations center (if activated and applicable)</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procedures to secure needed resources (space, equipment, people) to operate your public information operation 24/7 if needed</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified channels of communication for public, stakeholders, partners, etc.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you coordinated your planning with the community or state emergency operations center (if applicable)</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you coordinated your planning with other response organizations</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have designated spokespersons received media training and risk communication training</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do designated spokespersons understand emergency crisis/risk communication principles to build trust and credibility</li> </ul>
Yes	No	<b>Messages and Audiences</b>
		Have you identified special population (e.g. elderly, hearing impaired, limited English proficiency, developmentally disabled, etc)?
		Have you identified your organization’s partners who should receive direct information and updates from your organization?
		Have you identified all stakeholder organizations or populations who you believe should receive direct communication? These are groups or organizations that you believe have an active interest in monitoring activities and to whom you are most directly accountable, other than official chain of command.
		Have you planned ways to reach people according to their reactions to the incident? Are messages, messengers, and methods of delivery sensitive to all types of audiences in your area of responsibility?
		Are there mechanisms/resources in place to create messages for the media and public under severe time constraints, including methods to clear these messages with the emergency response operations of your organization (including cross clearance)?
		Have you identified how you will perform media evaluation, content analysis, and public information call analysis in real time during an emergency to ensure adequate audience feedback?
		Have you developed topic-specific materials for identified issues or identified sources of these materials if needed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Topic factsheet</li> <li>• Public Q/As</li> <li>• Partner Q/As</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resource factsheet for media/public/partners to obtain additional information</li> <li>• Web access and links to information on the topic</li> <li>• Recommendations for affected populations</li> <li>• Background beta video (B-roll) for media use on the topic</li> <li>• List of subject matter experts outside your organization that would be effective validators to public/media regarding your activities during an event</li> </ul>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Messenger</b>
		Have you identified spokespersons for media and public appearances during an emergency? Identify persons to act as spokespersons for multiple audiences (e.g., media spokesperson, community meeting speaker, etc.) and formats and ensure that their communication roles and responsibilities are understood and incorporated into their expected duties during the crisis.
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Channels of Communication and Resources</b>
		<p>Does your organization have <b>go kits</b> for public information officers who may have to abandon their normal place of operation or join a JIC?</p> <p>If yes, does the kit include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A computer(s) capable of linking to the Internet/e-mail</li> <li>• A CD-ROM or disks containing the elements of the crisis communication plan (including media, public health, and organization contact lists, partner contact lists; information materials, etc.)</li> <li>• A cell phone or satellite phone, pager, wireless e-mail, etc.</li> <li>• A funding mechanism (credit card, etc.) that can be used to purchase operational resources as needed</li> <li>• Manuals and background information necessary to provide needed information to the public and media</li> <li>• Care and comfort items for the public information operations staff (bottled water, aspirin, etc)</li> </ul>
		<p>Have you identified the mechanisms that are or should be in place to ensure <b>multiple channels of communication to multiple audiences</b>?</p> <p>If yes, do they include (but not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Media channels (print, TV, radio, Web)</li> <li>• Web sites</li> <li>• Phone banks</li> <li>• Town hall meetings</li> <li>• Listserv e-mail</li> <li>• Broadcast fax</li> <li>• Letters by mail</li> <li>• Subscription newsletters</li> <li>• Submissions to partner newsletters</li> <li>• Regular or special partner conference calls</li> <li>• Door-to-door canvassing</li> </ul>
		Are <b>contracts/agreements</b> in place to post information to broadcast fax or e-mail systems?
		Have <b>locations for press conferences</b> been designated and resourced?
		<p><b>Have you identified employees, contractors, fellows, interns currently working for you or available to you in an emergency, that have skills in the following areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public affairs specialist</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health communication specialist</li> <li>• Communication officer</li> <li>• Health education specialist</li> <li>• Training specialist</li> <li>• Writer/editor</li> <li>• Technical writer/editor</li> <li>• Audio/visual specialist</li> <li>• Internet/Web design specialist</li> <li>• Others who contribute to public/provider information</li> </ul>
<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Personnel</b>
		<b>Have you identified who will provide the following expertise or execute these activities (including backup)?</b>
		<p><b>Command and control:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Directs the work related to the release of information to the media, public, and partners</li> <li>• Activates the plan, based on careful assessment of the situation and the expected demands for information by media, partners, and the public</li> <li>• Coordinates with horizontal communication partners, as outlined in the plan, to ensure that messages are consistent and within the scope of the organization’s responsibility</li> <li>• Provides updates to organization’s director, EOC command and higher headquarters, as determined in the plan</li> <li>• Advises the director and chain of command regarding information to be released, based on the organization’s role in the response</li> <li>• Ensures that risk communication principles are employed in all contact with media, public, and partner information release efforts</li> <li>• Advises incident-specific policy, science, and situation</li> <li>• Reviews and approves materials for release to media, public, and partners</li> <li>• Obtains required clearance of materials for release to media on policy or sensitive topic-related information not previously cleared</li> <li>• Determines the operational hours/days, and reassesses throughout the emergency response</li> <li>• Ensures resources are available (human, technical, and mechanical supplies)</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Media:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assesses media needs and organizes mechanisms to fulfill media needs during the crisis (e.g., daily briefings in person, versus a Web site update)</li> <li>• Triage the response to media requests and inquiries</li> <li>• Ensures that media inquiries are addressed as appropriate</li> <li>• Supports spokespersons</li> <li>• Develops and maintains media contact lists and call logs</li> <li>• Produces and distributes media advisories and press releases</li> <li>• Produces and distributes materials (e.g., factsheets, B-roll)</li> <li>• Oversees media monitoring systems and reports (e.g., analyzing environment and trends to determine needed messages, determining what misinformation needs to be corrected, identifying concerns, interests, and needs arising from the crisis and the response)</li> <li>• Ensures that risk communication principles to build trust and credibility are incorporated into all public messages delivered through the media</li> <li>• Acts as member of the joint information center of the field site team for media relations</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serves as liaison from the organization to the JIC and back</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Direct public information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manages the mechanisms to respond to public requests for information directly from the organization by telephone, in writing or by e-mail</li> <li>• Oversees public information monitoring systems and reports (e.g., analyzing environment and trends to determine needed messages, determining what misinformation needs to be corrected, identifying concerns, interests, and needs arising from the crisis and the response)</li> <li>• Activates or participates in the telephone information line</li> <li>• Activates or participates in the public e-mail response system</li> <li>• Activates or participates in the public correspondence response system</li> <li>• Organizes and manage emergency response Web sites and Web pages</li> <li>• Establishes and maintain links to other emergency response Web sites</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Partner/stakeholder information:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes communication protocols based on prearranged agreements with identified partners and stakeholders</li> <li>• Arranges regular partner briefings and updates</li> <li>• Solicits feedback and responds to partner information requests and inquiries</li> <li>• Oversees partner/stakeholder monitoring systems and reports (e.g., analyzing environment and trends to determine needed messages, determining what misinformation needs to be corrected, identifying concerns, interests, and needs arising from the crisis and the response)</li> <li>• Helps organize and facilitate official meetings to provide information and receive input from partners or stakeholders</li> <li>• Develops and maintains lists and call logs of legislators and special interest groups</li> <li>• Responds to legislator/special interest groups requests and inquiries</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Content and material for public health emergencies:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops and establishes mechanisms to rapidly receive information from the EOC regarding the public health emergency</li> <li>• Translates EOC situation reports and meeting notes into information appropriate for public and partner needs</li> <li>• Works with subject matter experts to create situation-specific factsheets, Q/As, and updates</li> <li>• Compiles information on possible public health emergency topics for release when needed</li> <li>• Tests messages and materials for cultural and language requirements of special populations</li> <li>• Receives input from other communication team members regarding content and message needs</li> <li>• Uses analysis from media, public and partner monitoring systems, and reports (e.g., environmental and trend analysis to determine needed messages, what misinformation needs to be corrected, identify concerns, interests and needs arising from the crisis and the response) to identify additional content requirements and material development</li> <li>• Lists contracts/cooperative agreements/consultants currently available to support emergency public/private information dissemination</li> </ul>
<b>Resources to Consider</b>		
		<b>Space:</b>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You need space to operate your communication teams outside the EOC. You need a place to bring media on site (separate from the EOC).</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You need a quiet space to quickly train spokespersons.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You need space for team meetings.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You need space for equipment, exclusive for your use. You cannot stand in line for the copier when media deadlines loom.</li> </ul>
		<b>Contracts and memoranda of agreement:</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider a contract with a media newswire.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider a contract with a radio newswire.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider a contract for writers or public relations personnel who can augment your staff.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider a contract for administrative support.</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider a phone system/contractor to supply a phone menu that directs type of caller and level of information desired: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General information about the threat</li> <li>Tip line, listing particular actions people can take to protect themselves</li> <li>Reassurance/counseling</li> <li>Referral information for health care/medical facility workers</li> <li>Referral information for epidemiologists or others to report cases</li> <li>Lab/treatment protocols</li> <li>Managers looking for policy statements for employees</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
		<p><b>Equipment:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fax machine (number that's pre-programmed for broadcast fax releases to media and partners)</li> <li>Web site capability 24/7. Attempt to have new information posted within 2 hours (some say within 10 minutes).</li> <li>Computers (on LAN with e-mail listservs designated for partners and media)</li> <li>Laptop computers</li> <li>Printers for every computer</li> <li>Copier (and backup)</li> <li>Tables—lots of tables</li> <li>Cell phones/pagers/personal data devices and e-mail readers</li> <li>Visible calendars, flow charts, bulletin boards, easels</li> <li>Designated personal message board</li> <li>Small refrigerator</li> <li>Paper</li> <li>Color copier</li> <li>A/V equipment</li> <li>Portable microphones</li> <li>Podium</li> <li>TVs with cable hookup</li> <li>VHS VCR</li> <li>CD-ROM</li> <li>Paper shredder</li> </ul>
		<p><b>Supplies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Copier toner</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Printer ink</li><li>• Paper</li><li>• Pens</li><li>• Markers</li><li>• Highlighters</li><li>• Erasable markers</li><li>• Overnight mail supplies</li><li>• Sticky notes</li><li>• Tape (be creative)</li><li>• Notebooks</li><li>• Poster board</li><li>• Standard press kit folders</li><li>• Stock photos on DVD</li><li>• Bios of spokespersons</li><li>• Formatted computer disks</li><li>• Color-coded everything (folders, inks, etc.)</li><li>• Baskets (to contain items you're not ready to throw away)</li><li>• Organizers to support your clearance and release system</li><li>• Expandable folders (with alphabet or days of the month)</li><li>• Staplers (lots of them)</li><li>• Paper punch</li><li>• Three-ring binders</li><li>• Organization's press kit or its logo on a sticker</li><li>• Colored copier paper (for door-to-door flyers)</li><li>• Paper clips (all sizes)</li></ul>
--	--