

Communications plan template

First statements development template

Every organization should have a crisis communications plan, but many do not. In event of a crisis, the first step is to immediately release a holding statement. The template below can be used to help develop that first statement using the 5Cs outlined in the Book of Crisis Management Strategies & Tactics, vol. 9: certainty, compassion, concern, collaboration and control.

Certainty Provide a factual statement about the issues/incident: what, when, where, extend of the damages, current state of containment/ response.	
Compassion Provide an empathic statement about the impact of the event and how you are responding to support those effected.	
Concern Provide a statement about your values and how you are following crisis protocols.	
Collaboration Provide a statement about cooperative efforts to determine the cause and severity of the issue/event.	
Control Provide a statement about the actions to ensure the issue/event is contained and when people can expect further updates. Take the opportunity to thank law enforcement and other groups responding.	



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Where is this information being shared?

☐

Company website

☐

Press conference

☐

Social channels – list them:

☐

Others – list them:



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Crisis response Instructions

In a crisis, people want to know that you care, more than they care what you know.

It is important to provide prompt responses to crisis and that the organization take responsibility and express empathy.

This template is intended to be used to develop a crisis response statement. It is important that your organization immediately release a formal statement in response to any crisis event. Template content can be repurposed to align with your organizations internal templates and visual identity.

There are a number of different types of issues an organization may face:

- natural disaster (fire, flood, earthquake, volcano, storm)
- financial disaster
- environmental (contamination, explosion)
- technology crisis (data breach, loss of service)
- injury or loss of life

Three examples of response statement:

One: At 1:10 p.m. on Thursday, November 1, a fire was detected at Company X's shipping warehouse. Emergency crews remain onsite working to extinguish the fire. At this time, we are still in the process of accounting for any employees and visitors who may have been in the warehouse at the time of the fire. The safety and wellbeing of our employees and the public is our first priority. As a precaution neighboring buildings have been evacuated. The investigation is ongoing and further details will be provided in at 5:30 p.m. this evening.

Two: On Saturday, April 2, employees at TechCo discovered a data security breach that may have compromised the personal information of our customers. The protection and privacy of customers and their personal information is of utmost importance to TechCo. At this time the full extent of the breach is unknown. We ask that as a precaution all customers proactively change their passwords and monitor their accounts. TechCo will be contacting customers in the coming days to provide information about which customers have been affected. We understand this can be a scary thing and apologize for any difficulties this may causes our customers. Updates will be posted on the company website at 2 p.m. daily.



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Three: It is with great sadness that we share the loss of a member of a Highline family. On the morning of September 30, while completing routine maintenance an employee of Highline was killed. At this time the name of the employee will not be shared until authorities are confirmed that the proper notifications have been made. Our sincerest condolences go out to family, friends and coworkers. A thorough investigation is underway to determine how this happened and how to prevent it from happening again. We want to remind Highline employees that they have access to supports through our Employee/Family Assistance Program. Further information will be shared at 11 a.m. tomorrow.

