

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS 101

Long before a crisis ...

1 Using a team approach, identify top risk scenarios for your organization (begin with no more than three risks and expand the list later if necessary).



2 After identifying the top three risks, take action to minimize them. For example, if your parking lot is frequented by adolescents after hours, what can you do to make it less accessible?



3 Create a crisis communications team and identify the responsibilities of each member. For example, who will speak to the media? Who will communicate to the congregation and/or donors and members?



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4 Make sure everyone in the organization is familiar with the team and its functions.

5 Establish critical relationships that you may need to draw from during a crisis: an attorney, a media relations professional, HR expert and others.



6 Obtain media relations and crisis communications training. Practice your response.

7 Review your liability insurance to see if it provides funding for crisis communications professionals. This is also a good opportunity to evaluate your policy and overall coverage.



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