

# How to Conduct Your CRISIS AUDIT

**"25 Critical Questions to  
Ask When Doing Your Crisis  
Audit"**

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# What you will learn

- 1. To understand what is and is not a crisis
- 2. To better understand the components of a crisis audit and plan
- 3. To review the 8 audit standards
- 4. To understand components of each audit standard and how it is used in an organization
- 5. To review and assess the 25 audit questions

# Step 1

The first step in conducting your crisis audit is to admit you need to do so!

Easy enough, right?

But, where do you start ... first, let's examine just what is a crisis ...

# What is a crisis?

- A crisis is an incident, real or perceived, with a potentially negative outcome affecting your organization and/or its employees, services, performance, facilities, partners, image, financial sustainability, reputation/brand, or viability.
- A crisis always requires a response to coordinate internal and external information about the incident and appropriately address public perception, misinformation, and potential rumors related to the organization's response.
- A crisis may begin simply as a threat to your reputation or brand; it may be unrelated to your involvement or responsibility. However, if not properly addressed, the threat can become an actual crisis that can damage the organization as a whole.

# Why planning and practice is critical

- A crisis audit should focus on how to prevent a crisis by identifying your risks
- Your failure to plan in advance for the risks you may face can literally cost you your business and reputation
- Your safety and that of your employees can be seriously and negatively impacted without planning and practice
- Those who plan and practice for a crisis return to business more quickly

# What components have to be in place to conduct a crisis audit and develop a plan?

- You must have an understanding and agreement by all of your management about the importance of having a crisis plan
- You must have a checklist (provided here) to begin the review
- You must be willing to be open, transparent and willing to answer tough questions about your organization
- You must “plan for the worst while praying for the best” outcome

# **8 Audit standards to consider**

- **The following 8 standards are the criteria we should use when we conduct the audit. Be honest and direct in answering each question as these answers are critical to your understanding of your situation.**
- 1. Compliance**
  - 2. Preparedness**
  - 3. Training**
  - 4. Resource Acquisition**
  - 5. Resource Development**
  - 6. Information Management**
  - 7. Quality Assurance**
  - 8. Communications**
    - o Internally
    - o Externally

# 1. Compliance

- Are we in compliance with the local, county, state and federal regulations required of our business?
- What laws, regulations, and standards do we have to have in place to ensure compliance in the event of a crisis?
- Do federal, state and local laws apply to any operations on our campus that could be the source of a crisis?



## 2. Preparedness

- What is the legal department's (or your lawyer's) position on conducting a crisis audit and developing a written crisis management plan?
- What level of support at senior management (that maybe just you!) do we have to develop a plan?
- What level of support do we need to cultivate?
- What budget is in place or available to build a crisis plan?
- Is this budget adequate?
- If not, how do we build the necessary case to get more funding?

# 3. Training

- Do we have any mandated crisis and communications training?
- Who is trained or should be on a designated crisis management team from our organization?
- Do we have adequate levels of trained management and staff support to handle a crisis that could last as long as 72-hours?
- When was the last time we reviewed (audited) likely scenarios?
- How seriously did we consider these scenarios?

# 4. Resource Acquisition

- What resources (money, manpower, equipment) do we have or need to deal with a crisis?
- What do we need to acquire?
- Will we train in-house with a trainer?
- Can we train via webinars, teleconferences and briefings?
- Will we make regular practice a part of our organization's culture?

# 5. Resource Development

- When was the last physical review of all facilities and geography related to the organization?
- When was the last time we did table top exercises of the most likely scenarios that could occur?
- Who participated in these exercises internally and externally?
- What Lessons Learned resulted?

# 6. Information Management

- What reports or case studies are available for us to review from similar situations at other organizations as to how they handled such crisis?
- When was the last time the crisis management team was activated during an actual crisis?
- Who served on that team that we can interview to obtain real-time lessons learned?
- Did we conduct a plus/delta evaluation of the incident and what did we learn?
- What after-action reports are on file for review for lessons learned?

# 7. Quality Assurance

- What additional training do we need for this team? (Social and traditional media training)
- What remedial training do we need for the team?
- What additional resources (personnel and/or equipment) do we need to budget? Why?

# 8. Communications

- How do we manage critical information flow during a crisis?
- What are our backup systems to ensure communication continuity?
- Who is the one person responsible for the operation of the crisis management center and who is the backup to that person?
- Who is our trained spokesperson(s)?
- How many backups are needed for this person and our team members?
- Who handles our social media and traditional media monitoring and responses?

# Summary

- IF, and this is always the toughest question: IF you have honestly answered these questions you now have a better understanding of where you stand relative to what crises might occur in your organization. However, if you have had any tendency to say “That would never happen here!” STOP right now.
- The reality is that you can be faced at any time with:
  - **Work place violence**
  - **Terrorism**
  - **A disgruntled employee or customer**
  - **Fires, floods, tornadoes**
- The purpose of this audit is to get you to think about what is the worst case scenario we might have to deal with.
- The time is NOW to get prepared to survive and win in the court of public opinion and return to your business operations.



# What's next?



The next steps are to write your plan, conduct table-top exercises, get your spokespeople trained and establish and maintain a social media presence.

If you need additional assistance contact us at 1.888.340.2006. If you have an emergency text me personally at 270.619.3803 place "911" in the text with your name and a return telephone number. Your call will be returned immediately!

Please provide us feedback on this information by sending an email to [drdarryl@ldarrylarmstrong.com](mailto:drdarryl@ldarrylarmstrong.com)

Thank you and have a great day!