



# Crisis Communications

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# CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it.”

*-Warren Buffett*

“There cannot be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full.”

*-Henry Kissinger*

“When in doubt, tell the truth.”

*-Mark Twain*

# ON THE CLOCK

**60**  
MINUTES



# CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS & RAPID RESPONSE

A crisis will happen – it's a matter of 'when,' not 'if.'

- Stay on message
- Develop and follow a 'media protocol'
- Assemble crisis communications team
  - Executive director
  - Spokesperson(s)
  - Communications firm
  - Attorney

# CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS & RAPID RESPONSE

- Spokespersons should have standard ‘holding’ statements for immediate use:
  - *“We are getting the facts.”*
  - *“We are cooperating with the authorities.”*
  - *“Our top priority is making sure everyone is safe.”*

# MEDIA PROTOCOL

- What?
  - Script
  - Template for gathering info
- Why?
  - Clear, consistent messaging
  - Support spokespeople

# MEDIA PROTOCOL

- Write down as much information as possible.
- Get the following information from the reporter or media outlet:
  - What's your name?
  - What's your phone number?
  - What's your email?
  - What's your story about?
  - If TV or radio, ask if the interview will be live or taped.
  - What's your deadline?
- Tell the reporter someone will get back to him/her soon.
- Never give out any information, even if they pry.
- Be extremely polite but firm.



# MEDIA PROTOCOL





# ON THE RECORD VS. OFF THE RECORD

- Everything is “on the record”...
- Unless you say otherwise...
- And they agree
- Reiterate and remind
- Be clear
- Be polite
- Be upfront

# THE INTERVIEW

- Prepare
- Practice
- Smile
- Stand and project
- It's okay to say "I don't know"

# TIPS FOR STAYING ON MESSAGE

- Preparation: Have a plan
- Answer the question you wished they'd ask
- Acknowledge the question, then pivot

“Great question, glad you asked that”

# PIVOT AND PUNT

- The real question here is...
- Again, the reason we're here is...
- I can't speak to that, but what I can tell you...
- What I'm hearing again and again as I cross the state is...
- It's important to remember...
- The point is...



# IN ACTION

- SCENARIO 1: Squatters occupying a Land Bank-owned property started a fire to keep warm. The fire spread throughout the property resulting in two fatalities.
- SCENARIO 2: An unpredictable developer is spreading rumors and talking to reporters about negotiations with the Land Bank on an abandoned property.
- SCENARIO 3: A TV camera shows up at a Land Bank office wanting to discuss complaints from an angry resident.

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS