



# Crisis Communication

Session starts at 2pm



# HELLO!

I am **Karen Maher**

I am an experienced HR consultant and workforce development specialist originally from the North East of England.

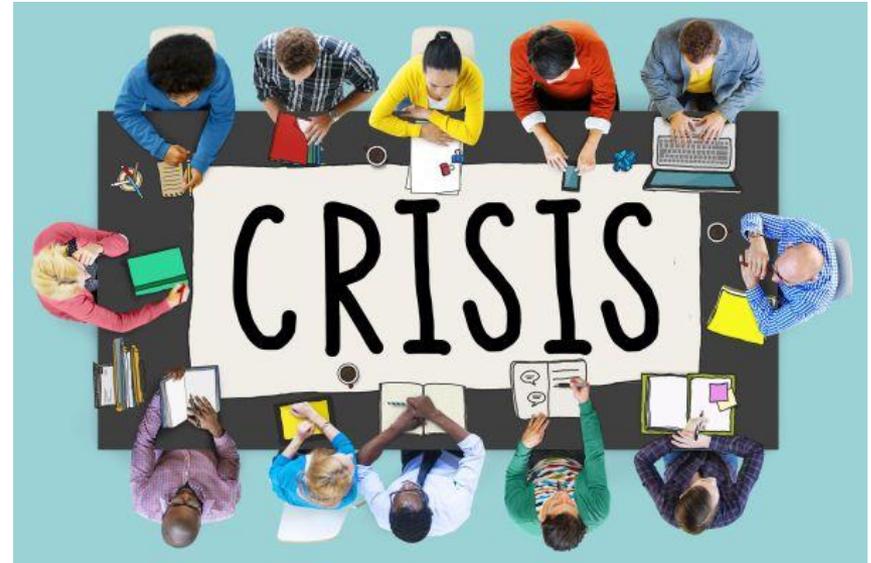
I specialise in coaching, mentoring, mediation and training delivery. I deliver QQI accredited courses including People Management, Supervisory Management and Medical Secretaries

I am qualified to administer and deliver psychometric tests including EQi2 (Emotional Intelligence) and MBTI (Personality Types).



# Crisis Management

1. Pre-crisis
2. Crisis
3. Post-crisis



Building communication into each stage

## 2 Types of Crises

Every business is vulnerable to hazards and potential crises. These crises are divided into two types: **natural or man-made**.

If a business is unprepared, these eventualities can interrupt business operations and cause catastrophic losses and potential closure.

The most common natural disaster for businesses is **fire**. The most common man-made disaster is **data loss**, such as having not backed up critical data and failing to store data both on and off-site.



# A Crisis?

Can you think of any  
[in]famous business crisis?



# Recent Business related Crises?

Covid 19 pandemic

Boeing's 737 MAX disasters

Huawei's US ban

HSE cyber attacks

Facebook-security and privacy

TUSLA- GDPR fine



# Crisis Management

**Crisis management can be divided into three stages:**

1. **Pre-crisis:** prevention, preparation and training
2. **Crisis:** management responds to a crisis
3. **Post-crisis:** looks for ways to better prepare for the next crisis and fulfils commitments made during the crisis stage

# Stage 1 - Pre-crisis phase

Prevention involves seeking to reduce known risks that could lead to a crisis. This is part of a risk management programme.

Preparation involves:

- Understanding your **key stakeholders**
- Creating a crisis management plan and updating it at least annually
- Selecting and training a crisis management team
- Conducting exercises to test the crisis management plan and team at least annually
- Drafting crises management messages and templates for crises statements



# Who are your stakeholders?

Who is, or will be affected, positively or negatively?

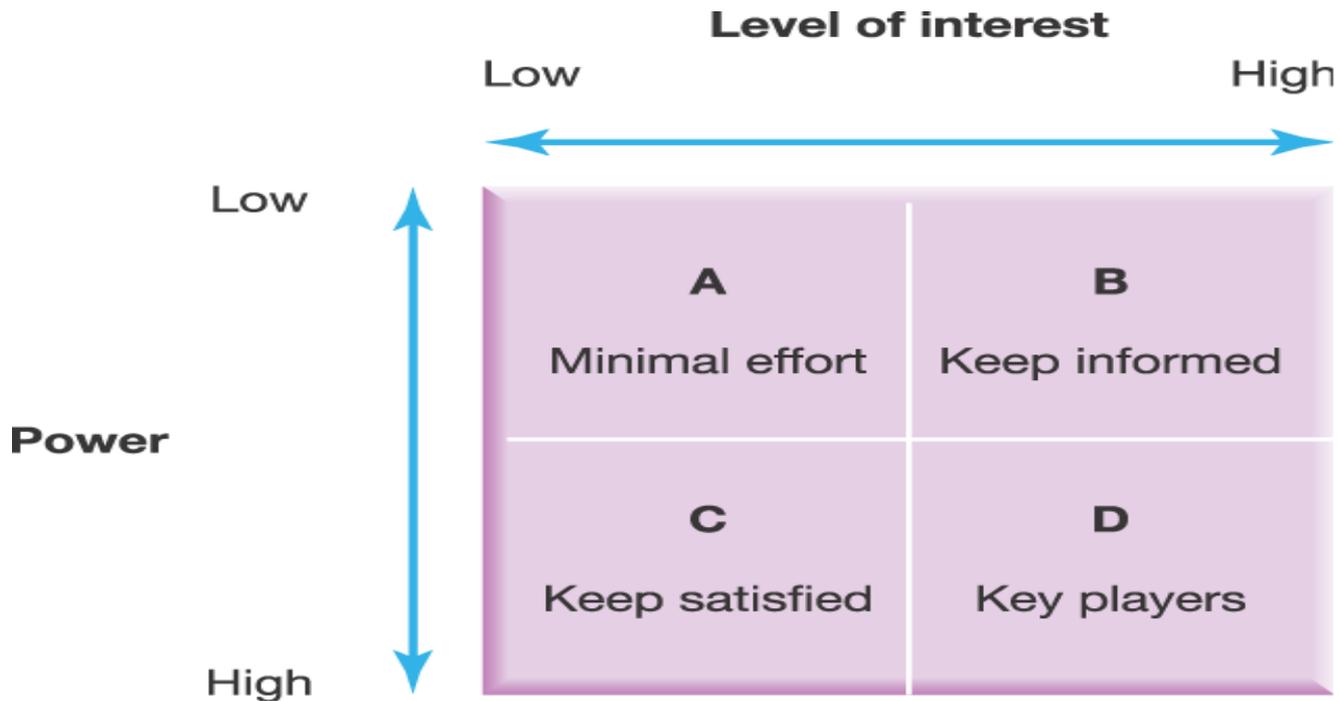
Who holds official positions relevant to what you are doing?

Who runs organisations with relevant interests?

Who has been involved in any similar situations in the past?

Whose names come up regularly when you are discussing this subject?

# Stakeholder mapping: the Power/Interest Matrix



# Pre-crisis communication

What communication skills are key in this stage?

Internal – your people

External – your customers



# Answers may include

- Building rapport and trust with stakeholders
- The use of concise questioning techniques
- Speaking plainly, assertively but professionally
- Recognising different behaviours
- Choosing the appropriate, professional response
- Managing conversations
- Scenario planning and evaluation
- Communication training



# Typical Questions

<b>From your people</b>	<b>From your customers</b>
<p>Do they still have a job ?</p> <p>When and where do they report for work?</p> <p>Will their roles or job activities change during the crisis?</p> <p>How do they prepare for working in a crisis environment ?</p> <p>Where is the crisis management plan and recovery procedures?</p> <p>What to say to customers ?</p> <p>Will they get paid, in what manner, and if not, how and when will they be paid?</p>	<p>What services or products will or will not be available?</p> <p>What alternate accommodations will be made ?</p> <p>Will there be any compensation provided?</p> 

# 5 Common mistakes in the pre-stage

## 1. Not starting early enough

Take the top two or three potential crises that are keeping you up at night, and start planning your communication strategy.



## 2. Not sharing info quickly enough

Things move very quickly in a crisis, and facts can be hard to come by. There's nothing wrong with saying: "We're aware of an incident and are looking into it. We will share more information as we confirm the details." That's letting your audience know that you're taking responsibility and will work to remedy the situation. Under-communicating leaves your audience to fill in the blanks, which is particularly dangerous during a crisis.

# 5 Common mistakes

## 3. Not having the right team

There are two ways to build a crisis team—by function and by temperament. For function, you’re going to need people on your team with a specific skillset. You need people in the room who are calm under pressure, detail-oriented, approachable, respected and confident. If you have someone with the wrong characteristics in the room, your crisis will be a stress-filled situation.



# 5 Common mistakes

## 4. Not building relationships ahead of time

When a crisis hits, you may find yourself working with teams you might not regularly interface with. During a crisis it's important to have your team's trust. Build strong relationships ahead of time that will pay off down the road.



# 5 Common mistakes

## 5. Not learning from your mistakes

The best way to grow is to learn from those mistakes to make better decisions next time. The same thing applies to crises. After the dust settles on every incident or crisis, we have a review session to identify what went well, and what should we do differently.



## Stage 2 - Crisis Response

The crisis response is what is **done and said** after the crisis occurs. Communication methods play a critical role in the crisis response by helping to develop the messages that are sent to various people and organisations.

The initial crisis response should focus on three points:

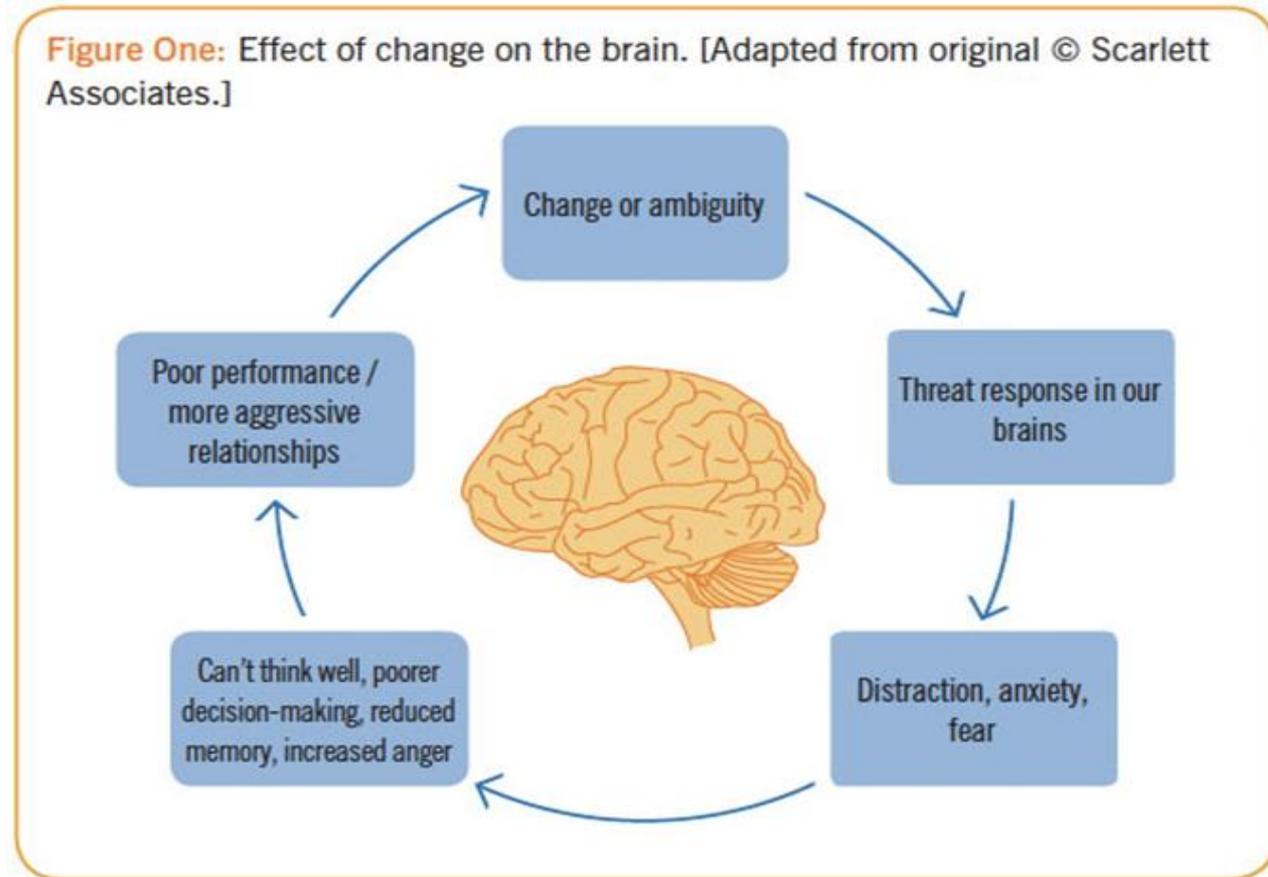
**Be quick**

**Be accurate**

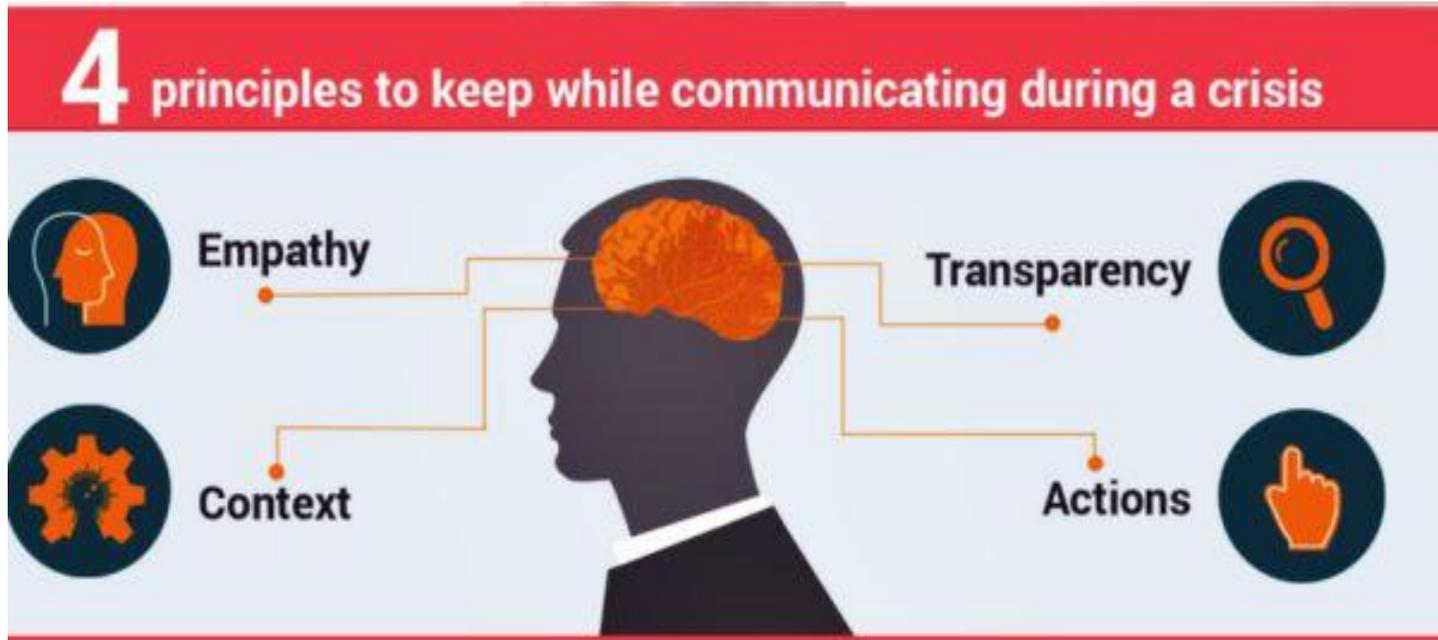
**Be consistent**



# How Do People React in a Crisis?



# Stage 2 - Crisis Response



What communication methods would you associate with each principle?

# 4 principles to keep while communicating during a crisis



## Empathy

Listen  
Reassure  
Engage  
Communicate with employees first  
Focus on the needs and concerns of staff and others involved  
Show you care

Empathy indicates accuracy in reading how other people feel.

Can you sense how what you say or do makes someone else feel? In a meeting, can you read the consensus of opinion?

# 4 principles to keep while communicating during a crisis



Empathy	Context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Listen</li><li>Reassure</li><li>Engage</li><li>Communicate with employees first</li><li>Focus on the needs and concerns of staff and others involved</li><li>Show you care</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Gather the facts</li><li>Concise questioning</li><li>Establish your key message</li><li>Keep people up to date</li><li>Reinforce your values</li><li>Keep your people at the centre of everything</li></ul>

# 4 principles to keep while communicating during a crisis



<b>Empathy</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Transparency</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Listen</li><li>Reassure</li><li>Engage</li><li>Communicate with employees first</li><li>Focus on the needs and concerns of staff and others involved</li><li>Show you care</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Gather the facts</li><li>Concise questioning</li><li>Establish your key message</li><li>Keep people up to date</li><li>Reinforce your values</li><li>Keep your people at the centre of everything</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Be visible, open, honest, trustworthy and candid.</li><li>Be clear and calm.</li><li>Have a communication plan that is shared regularly</li><li>Involve people managers</li><li>Provide two way communication</li></ul>

# 4 principles to keep while communicating during a crisis



Empathy	Context	Transparency	Actions
<p>Listen Reassure Engage Communicate with employees first Focus on the needs and concerns of staff and others involved Show you care</p>	<p>Gather the facts Concise questioning Establish your key message Keep people up to date Reinforce your values Keep your people at the centre of everything</p>	<p>Be visible, open, honest, trustworthy and candid. Be clear and calm. Have a communication plan that is shared regularly Involve people managers Provide two way communication</p>	<p>Appoint a crisis management team Have a crisis management plan Appoint a spokesperson Be consistent. Communicate frequently. Anticipate questions Create a fact sheet</p>

## Stage 3 - Post Crisis

In this phase the crisis is no longer the focal point but still requires attention. Important follow-up communication is required:

- Promises of additional information are often made during the crisis phase. This information must be delivered or risk you losing trust.
- The organisation needs to release updates on the recovery process and any investigations into the crisis.
- The amount of follow-up communication required depends on the amount of information promised during the crisis and the length of time it takes to complete the recovery process.
- A crisis should be a learning experience. The crisis management reactions need to be evaluated to see what is working and what needs improvement.



# Post crisis communication

What communication skills are key in this stage?



# The 5 Cs of Communication

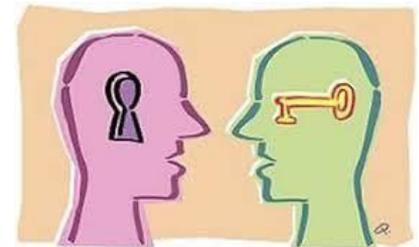
- 1. Concerns** – focus attention on the needs and concerns of the audience. Don't make the message focused on you or on damage control. Where appropriate, acknowledge the concerns of the people and deal with them directly.
- 2. Clarity** – where possible, leave no room for improper assumptions. The clearer your message is, the more people will believe you are disclosing everything they need to know. When communication is vague it implies that you are hiding something or only revealing partial truths.
- 3. Control** – remain in control of what is being said. When you lose control of the message there is no stopping the flow of inaccurate information. Your whole communication plan needs to centre on remaining in control.



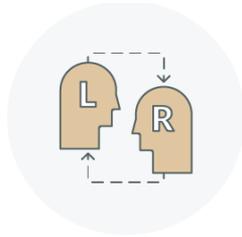
# The 5 Cs continued

4. **Confidence** – your message and delivery must assure your people that your actions are in everyone's best interests. It's one thing to deliver bad news openly, and another to effectively convey that you are doing everything you can to minimise the negative impact. Speak with confidence – acknowledge that you can't make everything ok, but make sure people know you're doing your best.
5. **Competence** – convey the notion that you are able to handle the situation and that you have the advice and support of many people (and, of course, make sure that you do).

**When you use the 5 Cs you assure people that you are competent to handle the situation and that you are not being deceitful. This reinforces people's belief in your ability to manage the situation**



# General Communication Skills



## EMPATHY

for listening  
and respect



## PAUSING

to improve listening  
and clarifying skills



## INTROSPECTION

to improve  
self-understanding



## TURN-TAKING

to improve  
self-regulation skills



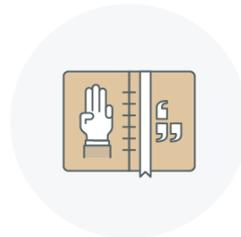
## ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES

to include non-verbal  
communication



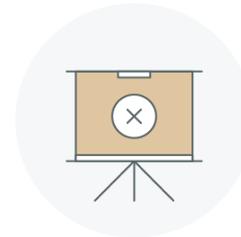
## CONVERSATION SKILLS

for productive  
dialogue



## RESPECTFUL VOCABULARY

to avoid heated  
conversations



## PRACTICE IN NATURAL SETTINGS

to raise confidence for  
different situations

# Summary

## Stages of Crisis Communication

### Pre-crisis

1. Monitor crisis risks
2. Make decisions about how to manage potential crises
3. Train people who will be involved in the crisis management process

### Crisis

1. Collect and process information for crisis team decision making
2. Create and disseminate crisis messages

### Post-crisis

1. Asses the crisis management effort
2. Provide follow-up crisis messages as needed

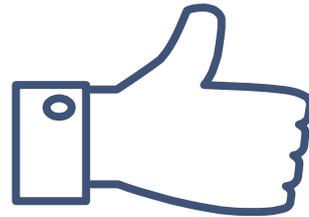
# Summary & Recap

## Q&A



**GOOD BYE &  
GOOD LUCK!**





# THANKS!

Any questions?  
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