The Four Elements of Effective Crisis Management

Agenda

- Types of Emergencies
  - Routine, Crisis, and Emergent Crisis Emergencies
- Four Essentials
  - Team Structure: Roles and Responsibilities
  - Incident Assessment Process and Team
  - Incident Action Planning
  - Effective and Timely Communications
- Successful Crisis Management Response

Types of Emergencies

1. Routine emergencies
2. Crisis emergencies
3. Emergent crises

*Out of
Danger
Comes
Opportunity*

Routine Emergencies

- "Routine" does not mean "easy."
  - "Routine" refers to the relative predictability of the situation that permits advanced preparation.

- It means you are able to take advantage of lessons learned from prior experience.

- You are likely to have thought about what to plan for and what is needed, and you have probably trained for them and done exercises for them.

*Out of
Danger
Comes
Opportunity*

Crisis Emergencies

- Are distinguished by significant elements of ***novelty***:
    - Threats never encountered before.
    - A familiar event occurring at unprecedented speed.
    - A confluence of forces, which, while not new, in combination pose unique challenges.
- Because of the novelty, plans and behaviors that may work well in "routine" situations are frequently grossly inadequate or even counterproductive in a crisis emergency.

Crisis Emergencies Require Different Capabilities

1. *Diagnose* the elements of the novelty.
2. *Improvise* response measures adequate to cope with the unanticipated aspects of the emergency.
   – Born of necessity, these may be actions quite different than ever done before.

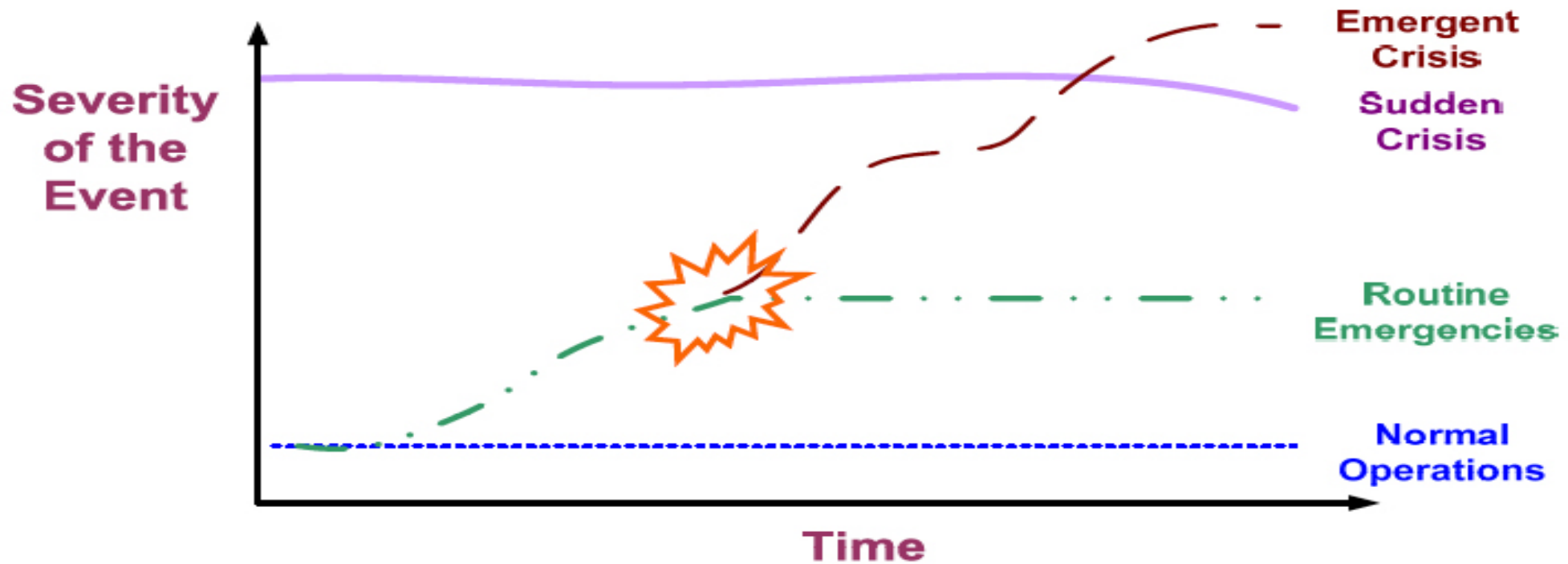The response must be **creative** and extremely **adaptable** to execute improvised solutions.

Emergent Crises

- These pose special challenges in terms of recognizing novelty because they look much like "routine" emergencies in their early stages.
    - Only *later* do they reveal their unusual characteristics.
- Leaders may be slow to see the new features that require a different response. They become "wed" to their original solution.

Routine vs. Crisis vs. Emergent

Severity of the Event

Emergent Crisis

Sudden Crisis

Routine Emergencies

Normal Operations

Time

Four
Essentials

Four Essentials

- For your incident management team to be great, four things must be in place. The team must:

    1. Know their roles and responsibilities.

    2. Have a clear incident assessment process, team, and escalation strategy.

    3. Know how to develop an incident action plan.
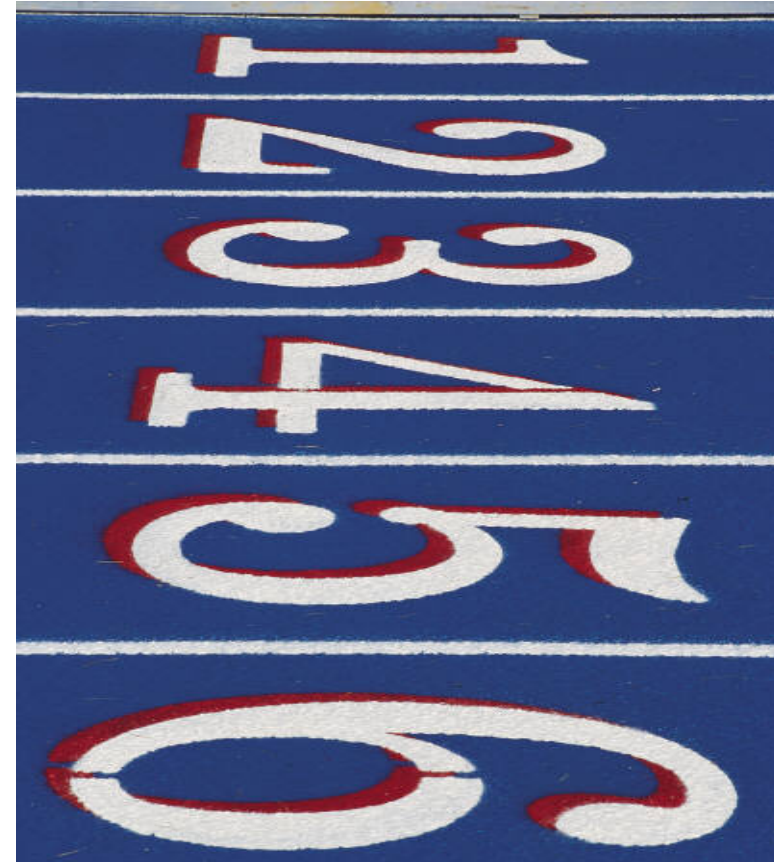
    4. Issue effective and timely communications.

Team Structure: Roles and Responsibilities

Out of Danger Comes Opportunity

Six Cs of Crisis Management

- In a crisis, six things are needed to manage effectively:

  1. Command.
  2. Control.
  3. Collaboration.
  4. Coordination.
  5. Communication.
  6. Consistency.

Organizing Your Team

- Most companies have a "tactical" team and a "strategic" team.
  - Tactical team members represent key departments.
  - Strategic team members are (usually) the executives.
- Is your team structured like:
  - Your "usual" reporting structure?
  - The Incident Command System?
  - Something else?

"Usual" Reporting Structure

- Pluses:
  - It's what you know.

- Downsides:
  - Span of control may be wrong for the situation.
  - There may be too many silos of responsibility to be efficient.
  - There might be a duplication of effort or things may get missed altogether.
  - There may be no clear authority.

Incident Command System

- The Incident Command System (ICS) was developed in response to a series of fires in Southern California in the early 1970s.

- It is used by the public and private sectors across the U.S. and in many parts of the world to manage incidents.

- Since 2005, all federal, state, county, and city agencies and departments have been *required* to use ICS.

AP / Rob Curtis

ICS Structure

Command

Communications

Operations

Logistics

Planning & Intelligence

Finance

Out of Danger Comes Opportunity
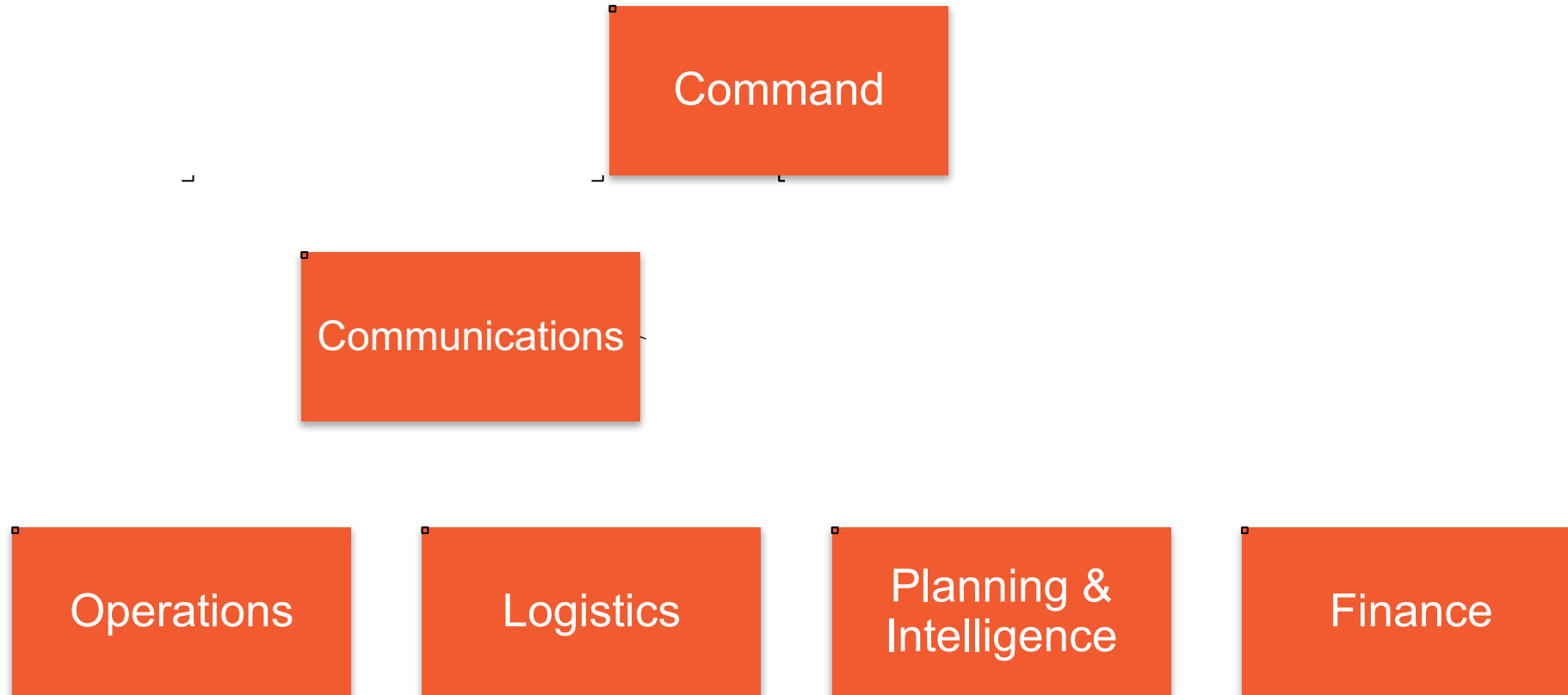
Executive Role

- The Executive Team has four overall responsibilities:
  1. Providing strategic and policy oversight.
  2. Providing approval of large expenditure requests.
  3. Acting as senior statesperson to all key stakeholders (employees, major customers, government agencies and senior leaders, Board of Directors, etc.)
  4. Acting as media spokesperson (if the situation warrants it).

Your Plan

- Be sure that your plan has:
  - Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for everyone in your team.
  - Checklists for all positions.
- Also make sure that your plan and checklists fit your expected risk profile, your "routine" emergency.

Incident Assessment Process and Team

Incident Assessment Team (IAT)

- Determine who should be on the team.

- Team's responsibilities:
  - Conduct initial assessment.
  - Review the criteria and escalation strategies for plan activation.
  - Determine whether to activate plan.
    - Note: Any of the members can activate the plan and the team.

- Communication:
  - Determine if the team should meet virtually at first via a conference bridge.
  - Identify where the team will physically meet when it's feasible/possible.

Situational Awareness

- Gather "situational awareness."
  - What do you know?
  - What is impacted?
    - Your facility? Other locations?
    - Are employees injured?
    - Are visitors or others on site affected?
    - Are there impacts to the business?
    - What about impacts to the facility's reputation?
  - What is the effect of the incident?

Initial Discussion

- What type of event is it?
  - Local event? Example: Limited power outage, fire.
  - Regional event? Example: Flooding, earthquake.
  - National event? Example: 9/11.
  - International? Example: Tsunami, flooding, typhoons.

Five Initial Topics to Discuss

- **People**: Are lives in danger? Is there a life safety issue? Is there an impact to employees, vendors, or visitors?
- **Facilities/Critical infrastructure:** Is a facility or critical infrastructure component at risk?
- **Technology**: Is there a disruption of technology services (e.g., telecom, network, data center)? Is there an information security issue?
- **Business**: Can the company perform mission-critical business activities? Does the event impact the company's key business? Does the situation have a significant financial impact to the facility?
- **Company or facility reputation/brand/mission-critical activities**: Does the event have an impact on the organization's or facility's reputation? Does the situation have significant impact to customers?

Activation Matrix

	People	Facilities	Technology	Mission-Critical Activities	Reputation/Brand
Your Facility					
Other Locations					
Regional Event					
National Event					
International Event					

Assessment Process

- What is the severity level?

- Does the incident meet activation criteria?
  - If yes:
    - Activate the Crisis Management Plan (CMP).
    - Activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).
      - Determine if it should be in the primary or secondary location, or if it should be a virtual EOC.
    - Inform the Executive Team.
  - If no:
    - Should the situation be monitored?
      - If yes, determine who on the IAT is in charge of monitoring, when the next briefing will be, and where will it be held.
      - If no, follow up using standard business practices.

Developing Incident Action Plans

Incident Action Plan

- An IAP contains:

  – Overall incident status / situational awareness.

  – Specific strategic objectives and any necessary supporting information.

  – Assignment of responsibility for each objective.

  – Date and time of the next operational period.

- The IAP should be written:

  – Allows for less confusion and miscommunication.

  – Becomes something that is easily shared.

Steps to Build an IAP

1. Assess the incident situation. Report the current status of the event. Gather situational awareness.

    –   Know where you will get your information: Employees, vendors, government, traditional media, social media.

2. Establish strategic incident objectives.

    –   Ensure that necessary resources are available to complete the tasks.

3. Assign all objectives (to a team or individual).

4. Determine the operational period (when you will meet again).

5. Communicate the plan to all identified stakeholders.

Out of Danger Comes Opportunity

*Out of
Danger
Comes
Opportunity*

Effective and Timely Communications

www.ems-solutionsinc.com

Effective and Timely Communications

- Effective and timely communications don't just "happen." They take careful planning and the right tools.

- What you need:
  - Communications plan that includes authorities.
  - Pre-written templates.
  - The right tools.

Communications Plan

- The Communications plan should clearly outline:
  - Who can write the communications.
  - Who can edit them.
  - Who can approve them.
- We think there are three levels to consider:
  - Emergency communications.
  - Tactical communications.
  - Strategic communications.

Pre-written Templates

- Pre-written and pre-approved communications templates are needed in order to have a timely response.

- These templates can be in the three major categories mentioned in the previous slide:

    - Emergency communications.

    - Tactical communications.

    - Strategic communications.

The Right Tools

- Determine which tools reach the most people in the fastest way possible. Identify your options:
  - Public address system.
  - Two-way radios.
  - Emergency notification system (ENS) that can reach:
    - Mobile phone (calls and SMS messages).
    - Office phone.
    - Home phone.
    - Work and home email.

Successful Crisis Management Requires…

www.ems-solutionsinc.com

Successful Crisis Management

- Successful crisis management can be achieved by having:
  - Appropriate team structure:
    - Clearly defined and documented team process.
    - Clear team roles and responsibilities.
  - Incident Assessment Process and Team:
    - Defined initial assessment team and process.
  - Incident Action Planning:
    - Written IAPs for all plan activations.
  - Effective and timely communications:
    - Written communications plan with pre-written templates and effective delivery tools.
- Successful crisis management also needs regular training and exercises to increase familiarity and competency.

Thank you

-

Regina Phelps

Emergency Management & Safety Solutions

San Francisco, California

415-643-4300

@ReginaPhelps

https://www.linkedin.com/in/reginaphelps/

www.ems-solutionsinc.com