

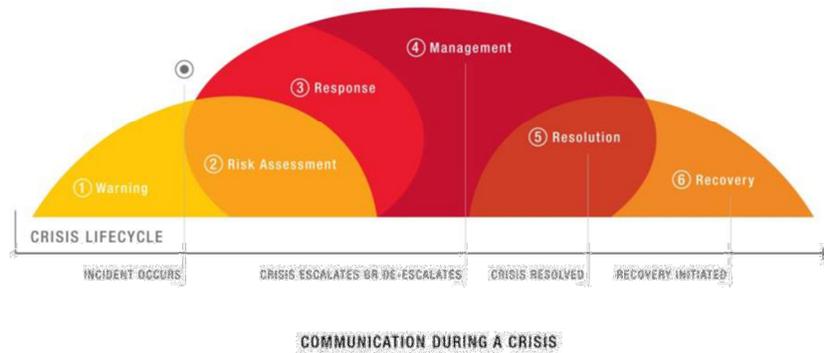
The Six Stages of a Crisis

Stage Five: Resolution



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Executive Summary

Two-way communication is critical throughout each stage of a crisis. During the resolution stage, communication should be simple and declarative and provide reassurance, confidence and stability to those impacted by the incident. Reviewing potential communication breakdowns and confusion that can result from physical, emotional or psychological trauma in a crisis also helps improve crisis response.

The Facts in Brief

A crisis interrupts everyday operations and can cause financial losses, destruction of property, security breaches, personal injury, loss of life and damage to an organization's reputation. A crisis is also complex and of unknown duration. As the crisis unfolds in real time, circumstances can change radically, as will the requirements, roles and responsibilities of the various people involved. Notifications will also change — both in terms of the information audiences need to receive and how they need to receive it. Those needs are partly dictated by whichever stage the crisis is currently in.

There are six stages within every crisis: (1) warning; (2) risk assessment; (3) response; (4) management; (5) resolution and (6) recovery. This is the fifth of six topic briefings to explore a specific crisis stage, identify the specific issues of that stage and provide manageable solutions.

The fifth stage of a crisis is the resolution phase. During this stage, crisis team members should communicate "all clear" alerts to impacted audiences and a return to "normalcy."

In addition, resolution stage messages should address the evolution of the crisis, such as details about the change of status from management to resolution and the process of transition to recovery that is underway. During resolution, information about anticipated recovery steps and how to obtain additional resources and information are expected.

After a crisis, consideration should be given to the emotional, cognitive and physical well being of those impacted. Organizations should address residual psychological and cognitive issues resulting from the crisis for all affected individuals. Inevitably, there will be lingering confusion, misinformation "pockets," and sequential communication delays and breakdowns — all of which will hinder resolution efforts.

Active monitoring and use of social media platforms is helpful to both provide and obtain relevant factual information to maintain situational awareness. Social media messages should mirror messages communicated through conventional or new media channels.

Embedding images as often as possible in social media messages enhances crisis mitigation efforts, as does using social media to continue conversations. In a crisis it's better to start a conversation than to react to one.

Monitor Twitter, weather feeds and various social networks throughout the lifecycle of a crisis. Abandoning social media altogether leaves organizations vulnerable so that messages and mitigation efforts can easily be hijacked and cause a crisis to escalate.

Key Recommendations

1. **Leverage meta-messages (i.e., your messages' body language):** What you say, how you say it, when you say it, the situational context, and the mental and physical state of the audience will all affect how likely they will be to respond appropriately. Every message should include clear instructions. To avoid misinterpretations and confusion, craft your messages carefully and ensure notifications are validated for specific contexts and audiences.
2. **Provide redundant messages:** Channel redundancy increases the likelihood your target audiences receive critical information. To keep target audiences up-to-date in a crisis, send messages via multiple contact paths (emails, faxes, push notifications, SMS, text messaging, etc.) until individuals confirm receipt.
3. **Monitor and utilize social media platforms:** Twitter, weather feeds and various social networks provide relevant, real-time data that is important to your organization. Track social media platforms throughout the crisis lifecycle to leverage situational intelligence, to deliver timely accurate notifications to affected individuals, and to make better decisions.
4. **Consider the impact of emotional, psychological and physical trauma on communication effectiveness:** During a crisis an organization that considers its target audiences can consistently deliver effective communications to those impacted. To accelerate crisis resolution, be sure to address in your communications the emotional, cognitive and physical well being of your audience.

About Robert C. Chandler, Ph.D.



Dr. Robert C. Chandler, (Ph.D., University of Kansas; M.A., Wake Forest University; B.A., Harding College) is Professor of Communication and Director of the Nicholson School of Communication (NSC) at the University of Central Florida (UCF).

Dr. Chandler's research spans the range of crisis communication, leadership, teamwork, decision making, psychometric variables during crises, and emergency communication, including specific areas of crisis and incident notification, warning messages, cognitive processing, and message comprehension. He also investigates organizational communication, communication and conflict, risk communication,

multicultural and intercultural communication issues, and business ethics. He is the creator of several widely-used planning models for crisis and emergency communication preparedness, including: (1) Communication Planning for the Six Stages of Crisis, (2) the 3-3-30© principle for incident notification, and (3) Message Mapping: The Chandler Model.

Dr. Chandler is an internationally recognized social scientific researcher with more than 150 academic and professional papers, including widely-circulated "white papers" on emergency and crisis communication. He has authored more than 75 academic and professional publications, and is the author or co-author of eight books including: *Emergency Notification* (2010); *Surviving the Pandemic: A Communication Management Guide for Business* (2009); *Media Relations* (2008); *Disaster Recovery and the News Media* (2007); *Managing the Risks for Corporate Integrity: How to Survive an Ethical Misconduct Disaster* (2006); *Pandemic: Business Continuity Planning Priorities for the Coming Outbreak* (2005); and *Crisis and Emergency Communication* (2006).

About Everbridge

Everbridge provides a unified critical communication suite that helps clients be better prepared, make better decisions, and respond quickly and confidently during disruptive events. When an incident happens, whether it's a natural disaster or an IT service outage, we automate communications to ensure that the right messages get to the right people at the right time.

The only end-to-end solution:

- **Planning:** Everbridge is easy to set up, maintain, and organize, meaning that you're always ready for a quick, coordinated response. Everbridge ensures that the right messages get to the right people - with the most advanced opt-in portal on the market, streamlined integration with internal and external data sources, and simple group and contact management.
- **Assessment:** When trouble strikes, you need rich insight, presented simply - so you can quickly assess potential impact and make an informed decision to avoid loss. Everbridge offers the only solution on the market that meets these demanding requirements, with the most advanced interactive dashboard in the industry.
- **Response:** In critical situations, ease-of-use can mean the difference between an effective response and a mistake that carries serious consequences. Everbridge is engineered to be simple to use under pressure, with a user interface that accelerates time-to-message and reduces the likelihood of errors.
- **Delivery:** Even during large-scale disruptions, Everbridge stays on. The most advanced platform in the industry ensures that you reach your contacts - every time. And with worldwide coverage and capabilities, including globally local calling infrastructure and data storage, we're ready to support you wherever your people are in the world.

Widely recognized by analysts as the market leader, Everbridge solutions are trusted by clients in all major industries and government sectors to connect with over 50 million people around the world.

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