

Crisis Management

Definitions are always open to debate but we see Crisis Management as 'that which needs to be done immediately to stabilize a situation'.

(Think of clearing a patient's airway before stopping the bleeding before getting them to hospital).

It might be to do with PR and the media but just as often it is operational issues that are both urgent and important.

- 1. Is the management structure for crisis management optimised for speedy decision making?**

Frequently the normal management system of decision making is bureaucratic. However if the crisis management system is too far removed from normality it will be alien to the staff. Ideally the system should be the normal one but speeded up considerably.

- 2. Is there a clear relationship with good links to Business Continuity and IT DR teams so that concurrent activity can be undertaken?**

The teams do not necessarily have to be different, as the roles can be combined, but if they are then attention has to be paid to the links between the teams and the flow of information.

- 3. How does the organisation define a 'crisis', and how does one know that it is over?**

There should be a commonly understood vocabulary in the organisation so that a crisis can be distinguished from other issues and a return to incident management and/or normality can be declared.

- 4. Does the organisation have a very comprehensive list of stakeholders/clients that can be used in a crisis?**

There is some overlap between PR media and crisis communications with stakeholders which is often best performed by the usual client facing manager. The personal message is often more persuasive than a blanket media statement.

- 5. Can two or more crises occur simultaneously?**

Yes they can and frequently do. An example could be data loss leading to share value reduction and reputational loss. It is worth considering how teams can be re-rolled into sub teams to deal with specific issues whilst under a unified command structure.