

BEFORE

DURING

AFTER THE CRISIS

# CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Practical guide  
to crisis management  
in the chemistry, plastics  
and life sciences industry.



**essencia**

where chemistry meets life sciences

# before

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- ➔ Appoint a **crisis manager** within your organization who can represent the management. Provide sufficient back-ups.
- ➔ Draw up crisis procedures. Who does what and in what order? **Set up a crisis unit** including the following functions: crisis coordination, secretariat (author of logbook), communication, safety and technical. Put into place a training programme with an annual review.
- ➔ **Draw up a list of bodies to be alerted** (authorities/emergency services) and always have it at the ready. Inform them of your crisis procedures.
- ➔ Arrange a crisis centre inside and outside your company that has the necessary means of communication. **Issue just one contact number:** the crisis manager's number.
- ➔ Anticipate contacts with the press: **draw up a press list** with the email addresses and telephone numbers. Include the social media in your communication strategy. If you cannot manage the press communication yourself, contact a communication specialist in advance and involve him in drawing up the crisis procedures and training.

# during

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- ➔ Every crisis is different. Expect to have to improvise but **remain calm** and show common sense.
- ➔ Record all incoming and outgoing information in a **logbook** (oral, telephone and written contacts).
- ➔ Show internally and externally that you have an overall view and are managing all events with **calm and professionalism**. In short, you have the crisis firmly under control.
- ➔ **The tone of the first message** (both internally and externally) is often determining for the way the crisis unfolds. So prepare it carefully.
- ➔ Show **empathy** with the victims, colleagues and local residents who could suffer due to the crisis. Installations, buildings and machines are easier to replace than people.
- ➔ Present a realistic view of the situation. You can say that certain elements remain unknown. Avoid the term “human error”.

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- ➔ Be honest, open and clear. Show you are able and determined to limit the damage and minimize the inconvenience. **Limit information to the facts.** Never engage in supposition or speculation (and if...?)
  - ➔ Circulate **an internal message** as quickly as possible with the information available at the time. Are there any victims, injured or persons unaccounted for? First inform family members. Draw up an external press statement on the basis of initial information and answer 5 key questions: Who? What? When? Where? Why? If necessary provide your answers later.
  - ➔ **Do not leave journalists** standing at the door but have them enter a separate room (not close to crisis centre). Ensure they are not left unaccompanied.
  - ➔ **If necessary then organize a press conference** headed by the company management, the crisis manager and the communication manager. Only do this in the event of serious incident.

# after the crisis

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- ➔ After the crisis, **an inquiry** will probably be carried out rapidly to determine the causes and consequences of the accident, precise damage and time needed to return to normal.
- ➔ **As soon as the inquiry is ended**, inform the press. First consult the internal services concerned (management, legal department, human resources, safety and environment department, and of course the crisis coordinator).
- ➔ Evaluate the crisis on the basis of your internal logbook and press reactions. **If necessary, adapt the related procedures and instructions.**



# FAQ



## Questions frequently asked at a time of crisis

- What happened?  
What is the cause of the incident?
- Are there any victims?
- Is there a risk to the immediate environment and how to guard against this risk?
- Are the substances released toxic, inflammable or explosive?
- What substances are they?
- Is the incident under control or ended?  
What still needs to be done?
- What was the cause? Technical or human error?
- What is the scale of the damage?
- Can we take photos or film?
- Was the licence in order?



[www.essencia.be/en/crisis\\_management](http://www.essencia.be/en/crisis_management)

# Notes



A large, light orange rectangular area with rounded corners, containing horizontal lines for writing notes.



**essenscia offers you its assistance  
in case of crisis.**

**Don't hesitate to contact us:**

✉ **incident@essenscia.be**

☎ **0490 645 444**



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