### What is a crisis?



- A **serious disruption** of a system or organization's normal functioning.
- Characterized by high stakes, uncertainty, and short decision time.
- Involves a sense of loss of control and potential for severe consequences (reputational, financial, operational, etc.).





# What is difference between a crisis and an emergency?



An emergency can trigger a crisis, and a prolonged crisis can devolve into an emergency.

For example, a ransomware attack on a company's systems is an **emergency** (immediate threat to operations), but if the company fails to respond effectively, it can escalate into a full-blown **crisis** involving data loss, regulatory scrutiny, and long-term reputational damage.





# **Types of crisis**

Product recalls due to safety concerns (e.g., listeriosis from polony), defects, or contamination.

Product Crises Natural Disasters Earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, wildfires, pandemics.



Data breaches/cyberattacks, software failures, equipment malfunctions, oil spills, power outages.



Product tampering, kidnapping, malicious rumours, terrorism, industrial espionage.

**Crises of Malevolence** 



Financial Crises

Bankruptcy, significant loss of revenue, market crashes, liquidity issues, fraud.

Deception (concealing information), management misconduct (illegal acts like bribery), or skewed values (prioritizing short-term gains over social responsibility). Crises of Organizational Misdeeds

Reputation Social Media

Crises

Personnel/ Labour Crises Strikes, boycotts, unexpected departure of key leadership, workplace accidents/violence, discrimination accusations.

Customer complaints going viral, employee misconduct, public relations missteps, false information campaigns.



### **Sudden vs Gradual Crisis**



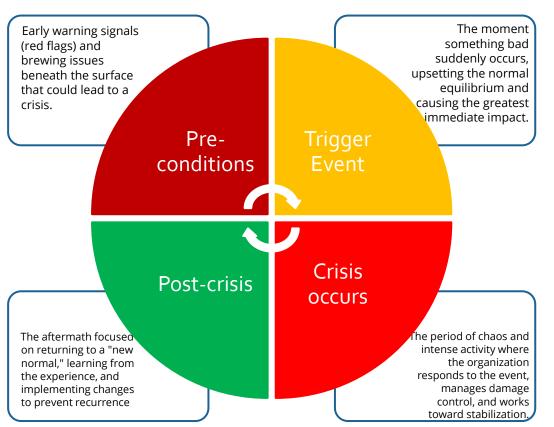
Crises can also be classified based on how quickly they emerge:

- Sudden Crises: Occur without warning and demand immediate attention (e.g., a factory explosion or an earthquake).
- Slow-Burn Crises: Begin as minor issues and gradually escalate over time due to negligence or unaddressed concerns (e.g., ongoing internal conflicts or a brewing financial problem that is ignored).

Understanding the specific nature of a crisis allows an organization to develop tailored strategies for prevention, response, and recovery.



## Lifecycle of a crisis







# **Essentials of crisis response**



**Strong leadership**, is the cornerstone of effective crisis management.

**Effective & Timely Communication:** Clear, consistent, and transparent messaging to all stakeholders, both internal and external.

Clearly Defined Team Roles & Responsibilities: Minimize confusion, Maximise effectiveness

Incident Assessment
Process and Action
Plan: Quickly identify and
understand the actual
problem.



### **Crisis communications**

**Concern:** Express genuine empathy and care for those affected.

**Commitment:** Commit to making the situation better and seeing the effort through to resolution.

**Competency:** Demonstrate that the situation is

being handled by capable individuals and teams.

Clarity: Provide clear, Combine multiple dimensions information, avoiding

**Confidence:** Project a calm and confident presence to help de-escalate panic and inspire trust.





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# Tailor crisis communications

#### Analytical (SE)

Use facts and figures to explain the urgency. Get to the point, and fast, or they lose interest quickly.



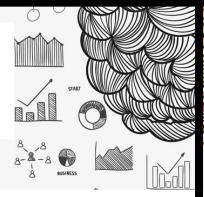
#### **Experimental (SD)**

Imaginative, big-picture thinkers. Make sure anything you present links back to the 'why'.



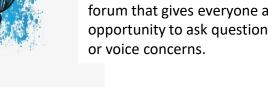
#### Practical (IE)

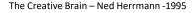
Present detail and plans where possible. Share communications in writing as well.



#### Relational (ID)

Communicate in an open forum that gives everyone an opportunity to ask questions







### **Tailor crisis communications**



**Suppliers** 



Government





Communities



A team or department



**Stakeholder mapping** involves stepping into the shoes of the stakeholder and seeing the

"What's In It For Me (WIIFM) principle

crisis from their point of view.

Unions





### Post crisis reflection/Lessons Learned





A crisis experience is transformative; the organization is never the same.



People may need medical and counselling services to de-stress and recover. Physical and mental health concerns may arise post the crisis event



Conduct post-incident reviews and after-action analyses to identify gaps and lessons learned.
Build resilience by integrating lessons into future planning and operations.

