




## Crisis Evaluation and Messaging Checklist

Use this crisis evaluation checklist to determine what happened, the extent of the damage, what you need to get across and to whom, and how to contain the crisis.

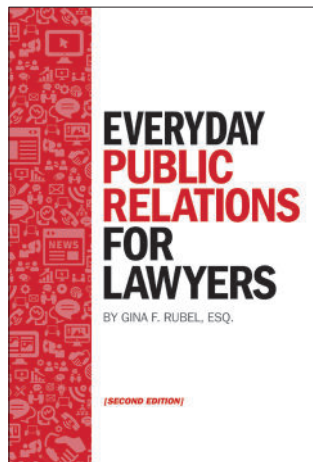
- What is the issue? What happened?
- What is the extent of the damage? How might the situation unfold? What is the best-case scenario?
- What is the worst-case scenario?
- Who is implementing the crisis management plan and who is alerting the crisis management team?
- What is the message(s) to get across and to whom (if/then)? What can't you say? Consider how your messages can be manipulated and include that in your notes.
- What is your position (if/then) as it relates to the issues/crisis at hand?
- Does the firm need to issue a holding statement? If so, what should it say?
- Does the firm need to set up a hotline or a staging area?
- What are the legal issues/considerations? Is there evidence that needs to be preserved? Is there information that is privileged?

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- When is the right time to act?
  - How can your firm contain the crisis?
  - Can your firm remove the issues and what tools or experts are required?
  - What tools will you use to monitor and evaluate the situation (keep an eye on mass media and social media, and clarify inaccuracies whenever possible.) The same tools that are identified in monitoring the media can be used for monitoring a crisis (see Chapter 10).
  - What if you can't rectify the issue or remove the problem? What does that mean to the firm and what will you do next?
  - If there has been a resolution, are you going to alert your key audience about the resolution? If yes, what should the resolution statement say? (Provide information about how it may have happened, what was done to rectify the situation, and what is being done to safeguard the firm/clients/information)
  - How will your firm answer future questions regarding the incident? For example, if you are in a new business meeting and the issue is raised, how will you respond?

Excerpted from *Everyday Public Relations for Lawyers*, 2nd Ed. @ Gina F. Rubel.

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## Get Expert Advice on Developing a Crisis Communications Plan



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## Key Message Matrix

AUDIENCE	MESSAGE (What you can/should say)	WHAT YOU CANNOT SAY
Partners and Associates		
Staff		
Clients		
Prospects		
Media		
Family members of employees (if necessary)		
Strategic Partners / Third-party Vendors		
Industry Thought Leaders (for practice group issues)		
Media		

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