

FMI Foundation Retail Food Safety Forum

Be on the Forefront of Retail Food Safety

June 11-12, 2015 | Chicago, IL
Hyatt Regency McCormick Place



Communicating During A Crisis

By Stephen McCauley



Remember...

危机

Make Communications Key Component of Plan



KEEP
CALM

AND

BUILD A CRISIS
MANAGEMENT PLAN



Communications

FMI Created Template for You

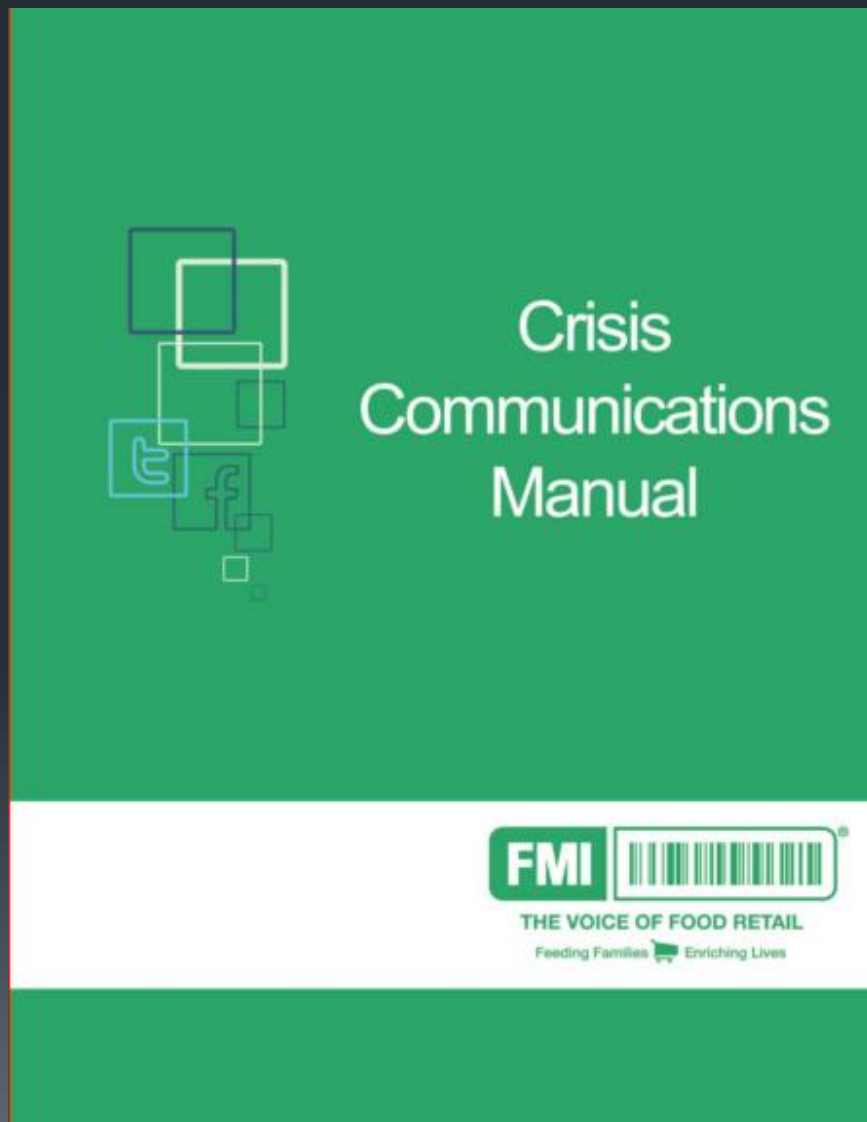


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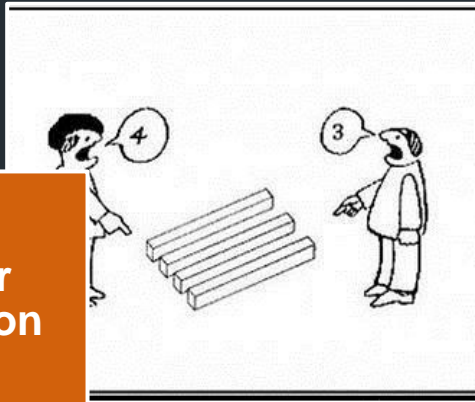
Be Audience Specific



- Consumers – domestic and international
- Trade partners
- Employees/retirees & their families
- Shareholders
- Competitors
- Regulators
- Federal and state legislators
- Community leaders
- Other opinion leaders

Remember Others' Mistakes

**Clear
Position**



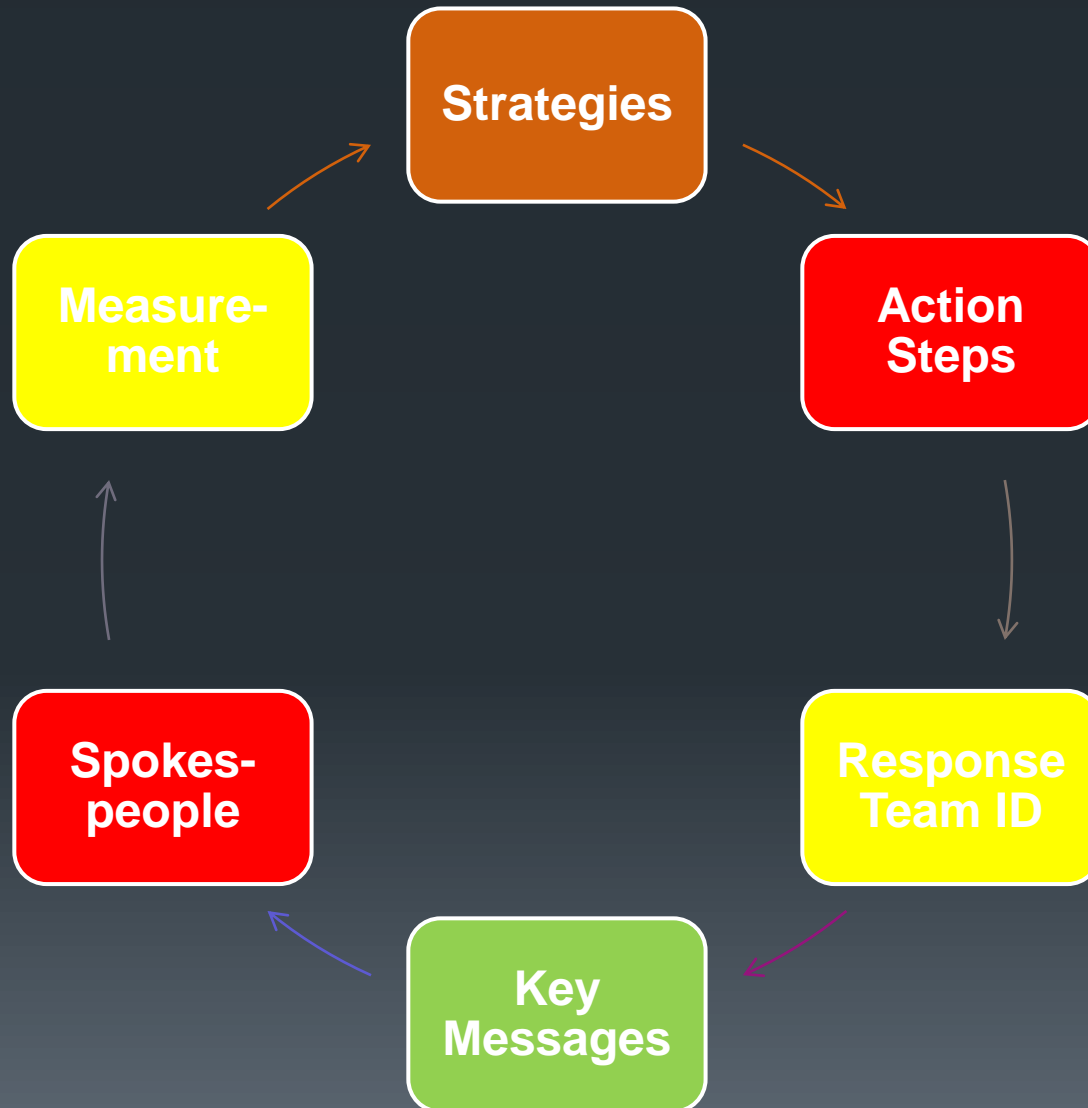
**Conflicting
Stories**



**No
Materials**



What's in the Plan?



Strategies

1. Establish consumer safety as #1 priority
2. Confirm safe conditions
3. Demonstrate commitment
4. Lead with facts
5. Mobilize third-parties
6. Monitor continuously
7. Evaluate

Action Steps

1. Gather info (constantly)
2. Identify issues/evaluate crisis or not
3. Assemble crisis team
4. Brief spokespeople
5. Shape messages and materials
6. Evaluate response options
7. Monitor and evaluate results & recovery

Response Team ID



- Team leader
- Senior management of organization
- Communications counsel
- Legal counsel
- Regulatory liaison
- Customer liaison or Manufacturer liaison
- Consumer liaison
- Employee liaison
- Media liaison
- Third-party liaison
- Medical consultant

Key Messages

- Standby messages for all scenarios
- Scenario specific messages for each worst-case

Spokespeople ID



- Each scenario may call for a different mix
- Have a cadre of options for each scenario

Five-Minute Media Training Refresher



Tell Your Story

- Every interview is an opportunity to tell one's own story.
- It is not an opportunity to answer reporter questions. If you don't have a message or messages to advance, you should not agree to interviews.

Not a Conversation

- The interview dynamic with a reporter is completely different from a conversation.
- The reporter is not the audience.
- One should feel comfortable after every question to pause and consider how to bridge to a key message.
- One should never fill in pregnant pauses.

Your Formula

- An easy rule of thumb for the media interview process is

$$Q = A + 1$$

- Q = Reporter's question.
 - A = Acknowledgment of the question (NOT an Answer).
 - 1 = one of the key messages.
- Great interviews are accomplished by bridging from the question to a key message.
- One should always anticipate the toughest questions and practice bridging from each to a key message.

Never Bluff

- It is acceptable to not have all the answers. Admit it. Never bluff.

Never Off the Record

- There is no such thing as “off the record.”

To-Do Tips

- Use the exact wording of statements that have been prepared.
- Assure reporters that you will be on hand to answer questions and will be back with more information as soon as it is available.
- Be responsive. Respond to queries quickly, even if you don't have new information to share.
- Readily admit if you don't have an answer but be prompt in getting back to them with the answer to their question or the information requested if it's available.
- Release only verified information.
- Keep accurate records of all inquiries and news coverage.

Not-to-Do Tips

- Say “No comment.”
- Talk off the record.
- Deviate from the prepared messages/statement.
- Offer a personal opinion.
- Respond to statements made by an “expert witness.”
- Give the names of the consumers involved.
- Blame anyone.
- Speculate on ANYTHING
 - causes of the emergency.
 - resumption of normal operations.
 - outside effects of the emergency.
 - dollar value of losses.
- Permit unauthorized spokespersons to comment to the media.

Practice, Practice, Practice



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