Strategic Crisis Communication and Media Relations Training Course



09 - 13 Nov 2026

Cape town

4600 € (Per Person)

Ref: #CW2877_258035

Course Introduction / Overview:

In today's hyper-connected world, an organization's reputation can be shattered in an instant. Proactive and strategic management of communication during a crisis is no longer optional; it is a critical business function essential for survival and resilience. This intensive training course provides a comprehensive framework for navigating the complexities of crisis communication and media relations. Drawing upon established academic principles, such as the Situational Crisis Communication Theory developed by Timothy Coombs, participants will move beyond theory into practical application. We will explore concepts from his influential book, "Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing, and Responding," to build robust crisis preparedness plans. This program, offered by BIG BEN Training Center, is meticulously designed to equip professionals with the skills, confidence, and strategic foresight needed to protect brand reputation, manage stakeholder communication effectively, and turn potential disasters into opportunities for demonstrating leadership and transparency. From crafting the perfect holding statement to mastering on-camera interviews, this course covers the full lifecycle of crisis management.

Target Audience / This training course is suitable for:

- Public Relations Managers and Specialists.
- Corporate Communications Directors.
- Media Relations Officers.
- Official Company Spokespersons.
- Marketing and Brand Managers.
- Senior Executives and C-Suite Leaders.
- Legal Counsel and Compliance Officers.
- Human Resources Managers.
- Government and Public Affairs Professionals.
- Emergency Response Team Leaders.

Target Sectors and Industries:

- Financial Services and Banking.
- Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals.
- Energy, Oil, and Gas.
- Technology and Telecommunications.
- Aviation and Transportation.
- Government Agencies and Public Sector Bodies.
- Manufacturing and Consumer Goods.
- Hospitality and Tourism.
- Educational Institutions.
- Non-Profit and Non-Governmental Organizations.

Target Organizations Departments:

- Public Relations Department.
- Corporate Communications and Corporate Affairs.
- Marketing and Brand Management.
- Executive Leadership and Management Offices.
- Legal and Compliance Department.
- Human Resources Department.
- Investor Relations Department.
- Operations and Risk Management.
- Customer Service Department.

Course Offerings:

By the end of this course, the participants will have able to:

- Develop a comprehensive and actionable crisis communication plan.
- Master the art of crafting clear, consistent, and credible key messages.
- Manage media relations effectively before, during, and after a crisis.
- Serve as a confident and competent spokesperson during media interviews.
- Implement effective social media crisis response strategies.
- Conduct a post-crisis analysis to identify lessons learned and improve future preparedness.
- Manage internal communications to maintain employee morale and trust.
- Understand the legal and ethical considerations in crisis communication.
- Protect and rebuild organizational reputation following a critical incident.
- Engage with diverse stakeholders transparently and effectively.

Course Methodology:

The training methodology at BIG BEN Training Center is built on a foundation of experiential learning and practical application. We believe that crisis communication skills are best honed through doing, not just listening. This course utilizes a dynamic blend of interactive presentations, expert-led discussions, and in-depth analysis of real-world case studies from various industries. A significant portion of the training is dedicated to hands-on activities, including crisis simulation exercises where participants will respond to a developing scenario in real-time. These simulations provide a safe yet challenging environment to test strategies and decision-making abilities. Participants will engage in role-playing for media interviews and press conferences, receiving personalized feedback and coaching to improve their on-camera presence and message delivery. Collaborative group work, such as developing press releases and social media content, fosters teamwork and allows for the exchange of diverse perspectives. This immersive and practical approach ensures that participants leave not just with knowledge, but with the confidence and proven skills to manage any communication crisis effectively.

Course Agenda (Course Units):

Unit One: Foundations of Modern Crisis Communication

- Defining a crisis in the digital age.
- The lifecycle of a crisis from pre-crisis to post-crisis.
- Understanding Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT).
- The critical role of a crisis communication plan.
- Identifying and mapping key stakeholders.
- Establishing a crisis communication team and defining roles.
- Vulnerability assessment and issue management.

Unit Two: Proactive Media Relations and Message Development

- Building positive relationships with journalists and media outlets.
- The fundamentals of effective message construction.
- Creating a crisis messaging matrix for different scenarios.
- Developing holding statements and initial responses.
- Spokesperson identification and foundational training.
- Understanding the needs and deadlines of modern media.
- Tools and techniques for media monitoring.

Unit Three: Strategic Crisis Response and Execution

- Activating the crisis communication plan.
- Managing the flow of information accurately and swiftly.
- Writing effective press releases and media advisories.
- Leveraging social media for real-time updates and engagement.
- Managing online reputation and combating misinformation.
- The critical importance of internal communication during a crisis.
- Coordinating with legal, HR, and operational teams.

Unit Four: Advanced Media Handling and Spokesperson Skills

- Mastering the on-camera interview and soundbite delivery.
- Techniques for bridging and redirecting difficult questions.
- Managing hostile interviews and journalistic pressure.
- Preparing for and conducting a successful press conference.
- Body language and non-verbal communication for spokespersons.
- Practical role-playing sessions with video recording and feedback.
- Handling leaks and unauthorized information dissemination.

Unit Five: Post-Crisis Recovery and Reputation Repair

- Evaluating the effectiveness of the crisis response.
- Conducting a thorough post-crisis analysis.
- Communicating recovery efforts and rebuilding trust with stakeholders.
- Strategies for long-term reputation management.
- Learning from the crisis to strengthen future preparedness.
- Case studies of successful and unsuccessful reputation repair.
- Final crisis simulation integrating all learned skills.

FAQ:

Qualifications required for registering to this course?

There are no requirements.

How long is each daily session, and what is the total number of training hours for the course?

This training course spans five days, with daily sessions ranging between 4 to 5 hours, including breaks and interactive activities, bringing the total duration to 20 - 25 training hours.

Something to think about:

In an era of rapid-fire social media and 'cancel culture,' how has the traditional 'golden hour' of crisis response been fundamentally altered, and what new ethical frameworks must leaders adopt to maintain public trust?

What unique qualities does this course offer compared to other courses?

This course distinguishes itself through a relentless focus on practical application and psychological preparedness, moving far beyond theoretical lectures. While other programs may discuss crisis theories, we immerse participants in high-fidelity simulations that mirror the pressure and ambiguity of a real-world crisis, forcing real-time decision-making. Our methodology emphasizes an integrated approach, seamlessly weaving together traditional media relations, digital communication, and internal stakeholder management into a single, cohesive strategy. The curriculum is built on a holistic framework that addresses not only the tactical execution of communication but also the strategic leadership and ethical considerations required to navigate complex situations. Participants receive intensive, personalized coaching on their spokesperson performance, with video-recorded feedback sessions designed to build genuine confidence and mastery in handling media pressure. Rather than just providing a toolkit, this course cultivates strategic foresight, enabling professionals to anticipate potential issues, manage reputational risk proactively, and lead their organizations with resilience and integrity through any challenge.