Strategic Crisis Communication and Media Relations Training Course



26 - 30 Oct 2026

Vienna

5800 € (Per Person)

Ref: #MAR7865_144268

Course Introduction / Overview:

In today's hyper-connected world, a crisis can erupt in minutes, threatening an organization's reputation, financial stability, and stakeholder trust. Effective crisis communication and media relations are no longer optional skills but essential components of organizational resilience. This intensive training course is designed to equip professionals with the strategic frameworks and practical skills needed to navigate the complexities of a modern crisis. Drawing on established principles, such as Timothy Coombs' Situational Crisis Communication Theory, the program moves beyond mere damage control to focus on proactive preparedness and reputation management. Participants will delve into the core concepts outlined in seminal works like "Ongoing Crisis Communication" to understand how to plan, manage, and respond effectively. BIG BEN Training Center has developed this curriculum to provide a comprehensive learning experience, blending theoretical knowledge with hands-on application, ensuring that attendees can protect and even enhance their organization's public image when facing adversity. This course provides a complete roadmap for mastering the art of communication when the stakes are highest.

Target Audience / This training course is suitable for:

- Public Relations and Communications Managers.
- Corporate Spokespersons and Media Representatives.
- Senior Executives and C-Suite Leaders (CEOs, COOs).
- Marketing and Brand Managers.
- Legal Counsel and Compliance Officers.
- Human Resources Directors.
- Government Press Secretaries and Public Information Officers.
- Emergency Response and Business Continuity Planners.
- Anyone responsible for protecting organizational reputation.

Target Sectors and Industries:

- Banking and Financial Services.
- Healthcare and Pharmaceuticals.
- Technology and Telecommunications.
- Energy, Oil, and Gas.
- Aviation and Transportation.
- Retail and Consumer Goods.
- Governmental agencies and public sector bodies.
- Non-Profit and Educational Institutions.
- Hospitality and Tourism.

Target Organizations Departments:

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

Course Offerings:

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

- Develop and implement a robust, proactive crisis communication plan.
- Identify potential vulnerabilities and establish crisis preparedness protocols.
- Master the techniques for effective media handling and interviews.
- Act as a confident and credible organizational spokesperson.
- Craft clear, consistent, and compassionate key messages for various stakeholders.
- Manage digital and social media channels effectively during a crisis.
- Lead a crisis communication team with clear roles and responsibilities.
- Conduct post-crisis analysis to identify lessons learned and improve future responses.
- Protect and rebuild organizational reputation following an adverse event.
- Navigate the ethical and legal considerations of crisis communication.

Course Methodology:

This training course from BIG BEN Training Center employs a dynamic and interactive learning methodology to ensure maximum skill acquisition and retention. We believe that mastering crisis communication requires more than theoretical knowledge; it demands practical application in a controlled environment. The curriculum is built around a blend of expert-led instruction, in-depth analysis of real-world case studies, and collaborative group discussions. A significant portion of the training is dedicated to hands-on, practical exercises, including simulated press conferences, on-camera media interview training, and crisis scenario role-playing. These simulations provide participants with a safe space to apply learned techniques and receive constructive, personalized feedback from experienced instructors. Team-based workshops will challenge participants to develop crisis plans and messaging strategies for hypothetical scenarios, fostering critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving skills. The methodology is designed to be immersive and engaging, ensuring that participants leave not just with knowledge, but with the confidence and competence to manage high-stakes communication challenges effectively.

Course Agenda (Course Units):

Unit One: Foundations of Modern Crisis Communication

- The Anatomy of a Crisis in the Digital Age.
- Types of Crises: Operational, Reputational, and Financial.
- The Role of Communication in Crisis Management.
- Introduction to Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT).
- Understanding the Media Landscape: Traditional vs. New Media.
- Key Principles of Stakeholder Communication and Mapping.
- The Legal and Ethical Dimensions of Crisis Response.

Unit Two: Proactive Crisis Preparedness and Planning

- Conducting a Crisis Vulnerability Audit.
- Developing a Comprehensive Crisis Communication Plan.
- Forming and Training the Crisis Communication Team.
- Establishing a Crisis Monitoring and Early Warning System.
- Pre-drafting Holding Statements and Core Messaging Templates.
- Building Positive Relationships with Media and Key Influencers.
- Integrating Internal and External Communication Strategies.

Unit Three: Strategic Crisis Response and Message Development

- The First 24 Hours: The "Golden Hour" of Crisis Response.
- Activating the Crisis Communication Plan and Team.
- Crafting Compelling, Clear, and Empathetic Key Messages.
- The Art of the Apology: When and How to Say Sorry.
- Managing the Information Flow and Combating Misinformation.
- Techniques for Effective Spokesperson Selection and Training.
- Coordinating with Legal, HR, and Operations Teams.

Unit Four: Advanced Media Handling and Digital Crisis Management

- Preparing for and Conducting Successful Media Interviews.
- Managing Press Conferences and Media Briefings.
- Techniques for Handling Difficult and Hostile Questions.
- Navigating the Challenges of Social Media Crisis Communication.
- Monitoring and Responding to Online Conversations and Influencers.
- Leveraging Digital Platforms for Direct Stakeholder Engagement.
- Managing Online Reputation and Search Engine Results Post-Crisis.

Unit Five: Post-Crisis Recovery and Organizational Learning

- Strategies for Long-Term Reputation Repair and Rebuilding Trust.
- Conducting a Thorough Post-Crisis Evaluation.
- Communicating Corrective Actions and Organizational Changes.
- Transforming a Crisis into an Opportunity for Growth.
- Case Study Analysis: Learning from Communication Successes and Failures.
- Final Crisis Simulation: Integrating All Learned Skills.
- Developing a Personal Action Plan for Continuous Improvement.

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, is it more important for a company's initial crisis response to be fast or to be 100% accurate?

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

This course distinguishes itself by moving beyond theoretical discussions to provide a deeply practical and immersive learning experience. While many programs focus solely on reactive media handling, our curriculum places a significant emphasis on proactive crisis preparedness and strategic reputation management, viewing a crisis not just as a threat to be managed but as a potential turning point for organizational strengthening. A key differentiator is our extensive use of high-fidelity simulations, including realistic on-camera media interview training and dynamic social media crisis scenarios, which provide a safe yet challenging environment for participants to test their skills and build confidence. The content is rooted in established academic frameworks, such as Coombs' SCCT, but is delivered with a focus on real-world applicability. We analyze a diverse range of contemporary case studies, exploring both the successes and failures of major organizations to distill actionable lessons. The course is designed to foster strategic thinking, ensuring participants learn not just what to do, but why they are doing it, enabling them to adapt their approach to any crisis context with intelligence and agility.