

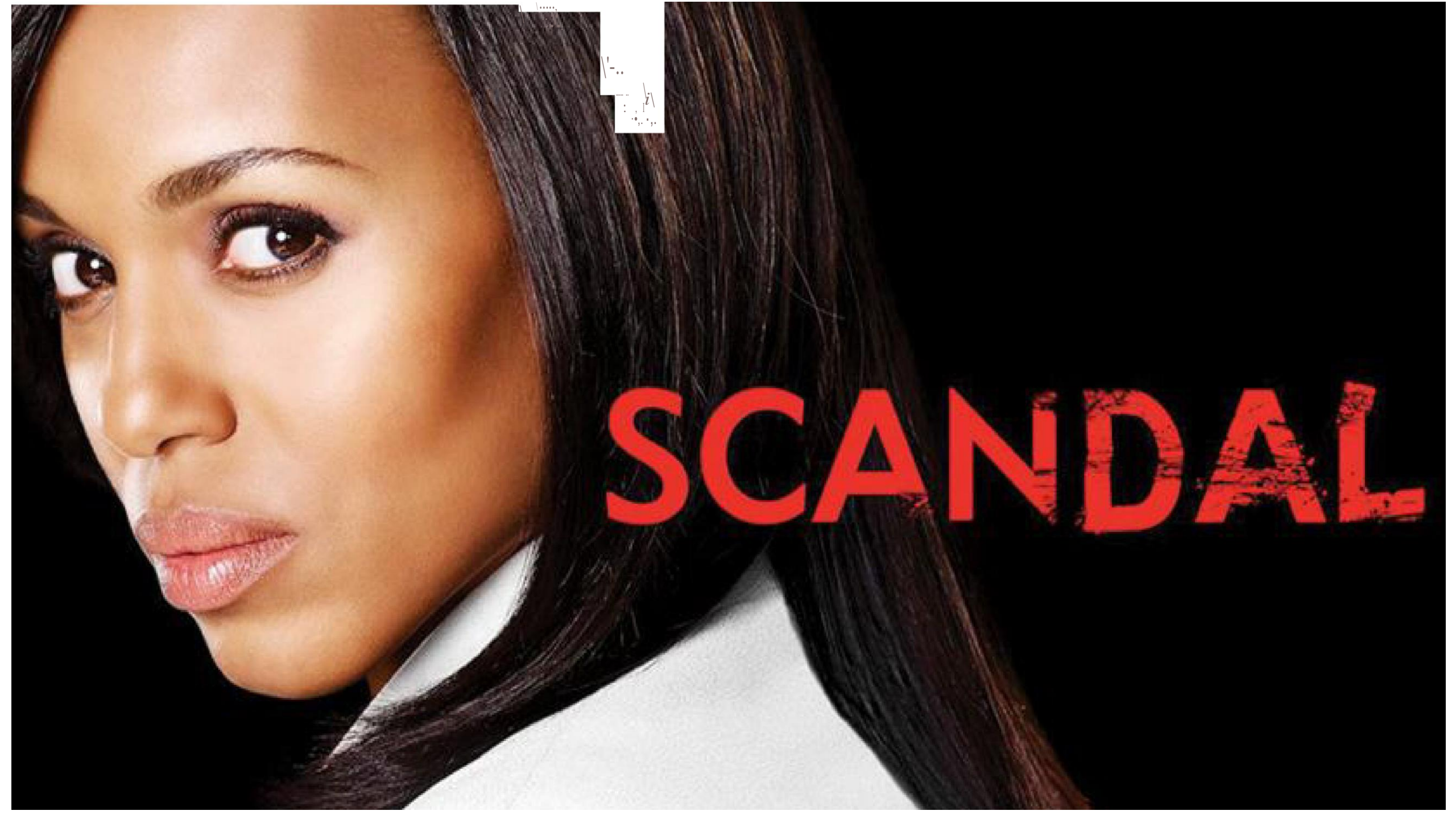
COMMUNICATING IN A **CRISIS**

Not **IF**, But **WHEN ...**



ALABAMA
ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL BOARDS

Dana Vandiver
Director of Public Relations



SCANDAL





Objectives

- **Understand the Anatomy of a Crisis**
- **Learn Phases of Crisis Communications**
- **Discuss the Role of Social Media**
- **Learn Tips & Strategies for Dealing with the Media**

Cri•sis

A time of intense difficulty, trouble, or danger; a time when a difficult or important decision must be made.

Cri • sis

Any event, issue or situation that **threatens to **undermine the relationship** between your school district and one or more of its stakeholders**

**“IT CAN’T
HAPPEN
HERE”**



Girl, 14, dies after shooting near Montgomery middle school; 1 in custody



After Tornado, an Alabama School Tallies the Grief

By ADAM NOSSITER MARCH 3, 2007



Alabama school hostage update: Man shoots Alabama bus driver, 6-year-old boy held hos

BY: Luteef Murgin, CNN
POSTED: 9:20 AM, Jan 30, 2013

17-year-old student killed in shooting at Alabama high school
Police

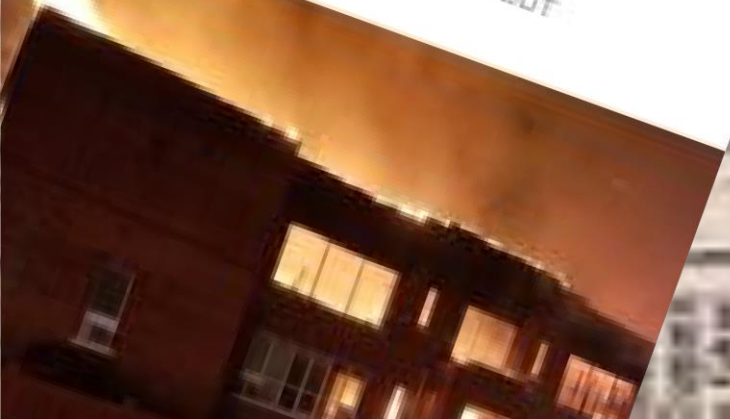
By David Caplan
Mar 8, 2018, 12:46 AM ET



Fire consumes building at Montgomery's Booker T. Washington High School



Updated on Aug 18, 2018 at 01:48 PM CDT



Former assistant principal guilty of videoing naked teen girl through bathroom window

800 Students Snowed in at Alabama Schools



CNNwire

5 years ago



Types of Crises

- **Sudden**
- **Simmering**
- **Sustained**



Sudden

- **Initial chaos, followed by “aftershocks”**
- **Can still be prepared for**
- **Speed is imperative**



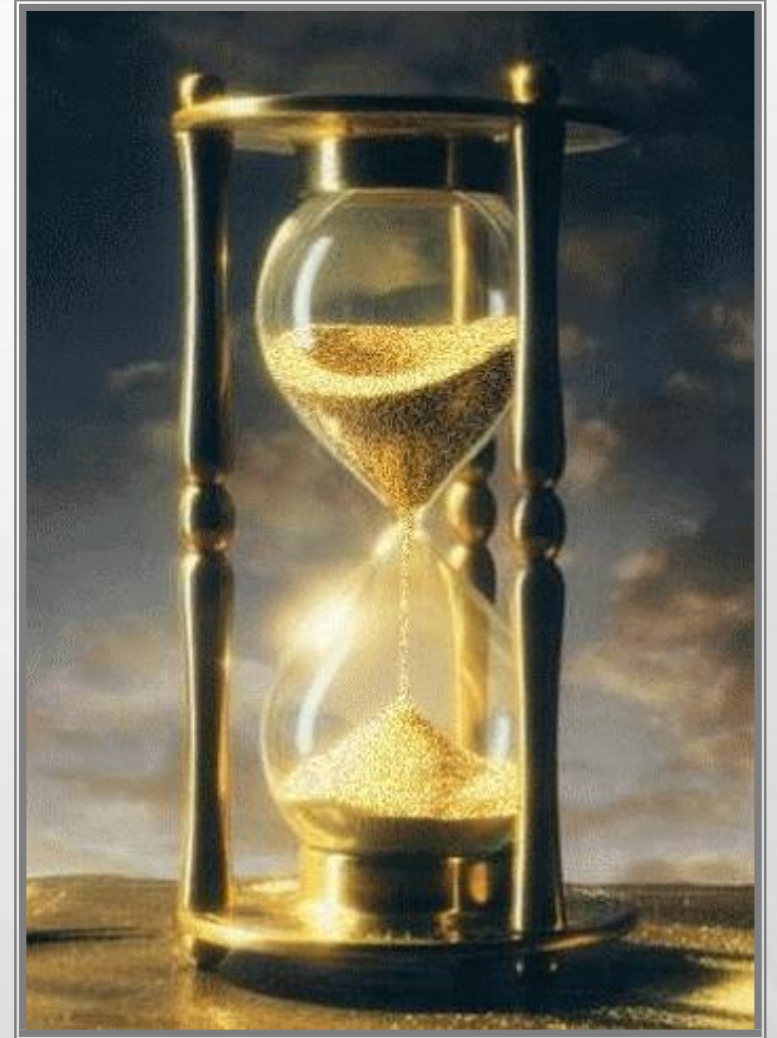
Simmering

- **More likely**
- **Can still be prepared for**
- **Often avoided, ignored**
- **Potential severity misunderstood**
- **Mismanagement/human error**
- **Reflects on quality/ability of management**

65%

Sustained

- **Involves situations that may linger for years**
- **Does not go away despite continued efforts**
- **Occur if crisis not handled correctly in early stages**



Categories of Crises

- **Facilities**
- **Community**
- **Employee**
- **Student**
- **Image**

Why Is Crisis Communications Important?

Important Because ...

- **Media help set community/region/national & world agendas**
- **Media has significant impact on PERCEPTION and REPUTATION**
- **Need for communication GROWS**

Important Because ...

- **Minimizes damage, improves morale, encourages healing**
- **More long-term damage BEFORE and AFTER a crisis than during**

Important Because ...

People remember **HOW**
a crisis was handled far
longer than they
remember the details of
the crisis.

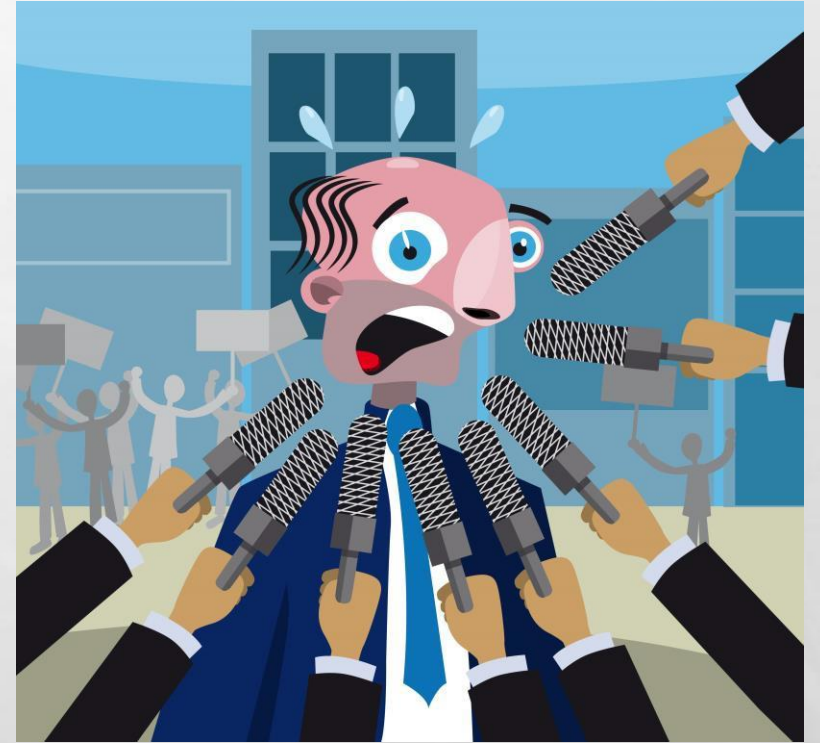


Exhibit A:





“Flight 3411 from Chicago to Louisville was overbooked. After our team looked for volunteers, one customer refused to leave the aircraft voluntarily and law enforcement was asked to come to the gate. We apologize for the overbook situation. Further details on the removed customer should be directed to authorities.”



EIElegante101

@skolanach

Follow

Replying to @ABC

United Airlines updated their logo today in order to more accurately reflect their aggressive customer service policies.



Let Us Re-Accommodate™ You!

UNITED

**WE CAME TO KICK ASS AND
SELL SEATS**

**AND WE'RE ALL OUT OF
SEATS**

memegenerator.net

**Around noon the
next day...**

This is an upsetting event to all of us here at United. I apologize for having to re-accommodate these customers. Our team is moving with a sense of urgency to work with the authorities and conduct our own detailed review of what happened.

We are also reaching out to this passenger to talk directly to him and further address and resolve this situation.

- Oscar Munoz, CEO, United Airlines



United Over Bookings

@UnitedOverBooks



sorry we overbooked our flight

3:20 PM - Apr 10, 2017

♡ 17.8K 💬 12.2K people are talking about this

Dear Team,

Like you, I was upset to see and hear about what happened last night aboard United Express Flight 3411 headed from Chicago to Louisville. While the facts and circumstances are still evolving, especially with respect to why this customer defied Chicago Aviation Security Officers the way he did, to give you a clearer picture of what transpired, I've included below a recap from the preliminary reports filed by our employees.


As you will read, this situation was unfortunately compounded when one of the passengers we politely asked to deplane refused and it became necessary to contact Chicago Aviation Security Officers to help. Our employees followed established procedures for dealing with situations like this. While I deeply regret this situation arose, I also emphatically stand behind all of you, and I want to commend you for continuing to go above and beyond to ensure we fly right.

EDITION US THE HUFFINGTON POST

NEWS POLITICS ENTERTAINMENT LIFESTYLE IMPACT VOICES VIDEO ALL SECTIONS

Insight# Do you need to simplify operations? Find out if hyperconvergence is right for your company. View the infographic

UNITED CEO BLAMES THE VICTIM!



HuffPost @HuffPost

Now leading HuffPost: UNITED CEO BLAMES THE VICTIM! 3http://huff.to/2oIPQNY

12:25 AM - Apr 11, 2017

367 509 people are talking about this

LEAD

After Dragging Bloody Passenger Off Plane and Blaming Him, United Airlines Has Actually United Americans (in Disgust)

Imagine the glee at Pepsi in the wake of United's bad actions and horrible PR.

in f

By Bill Murphy Jr. Contributing editor, [PAC.com](#) @BillMurphyJr



Southwest[®] 
We beat the competition. Not you.



Lucinda Sh

Apr 11 2017



Even as the internet kicked up a maelstrom of outrage, investors still thought United Airlines' decision to [forcibly eject a customer from an overbooked flight](#) would have little effect on the company's profits.

But that changed Tuesday, when shares of United fell as much as 6.3% in pre market trading, dropping \$1.4 billion from the now \$21 billion company by market cap. By early trading Tuesday, shares were down 4%.

**United's stock price dips by
over a billion dollars.**

“The secret of crisis management is not good vs. bad, it’s preventing the bad from getting worse.”

**– Andy Gilman of Comm Core Consulting
Group.**

ACTIVITY

- ❖ You are the CEO of United Airlines.
- ❖ Write a brief statement addressing passenger removal incident on United Flight 3411 from Chicago to Louisville.



Crisis Communications:

The 4 R's

- **Readiness**
- **Response**
- **Reassurance**
- **Recovery**

Before a Crisis =

Readiness



~~Life~~ A CRISIS is
like a box of
chocolates; You

never know what
you're gonna get

- Forrest Gump

*He who fails to plan
is planning to fail.*

- Winston Churchill



CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

- **Policy**
- **Roles & Responsibilities**
- **Key Contacts**
- **Checklist**
- **Messaging Channels**
- **Social Media**
- **Spokesperson Prep**
- **Holding Statements**

POLICY

- **Who is on crisis communications team?**
- **Who is authorized to serve as spokesperson?**
- **How/when crisis communications plan activated?**
- **Who has authority to call team together?**
- **Where is the command center?**

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Assign specific roles to crisis team members**
- **Training and refresher training for spokespersons**
- **Rehearse regularly**

KEY CONTACTS

- **Crisis team members**
- **Local responders**
- **Inside the system**
- **Media contacts list**
- **Outside the system**
- **Log-in credentials**

CHECKLIST / ACTION PLAN

- Gather facts**
- Brief internal stakeholders**
- Prepare key messages**
- Inform external stakeholders**
- Etc.**

MESSAGING CHANNELS

Key Audiences & Best Communication Channels

❖ **Text Alerts**

❖ **Website**

❖ **Facebook/Twitter**

❖ **YouTube**

❖ **Push Notifications**

❖ **E-Blasts**

❖ **Robo-Calls**

❖ **Traditional media**

SOCIAL MEDIA

- **Who can post?**
- **Who gives clearance to post?**
- **What info can be shared?**
- **Who will monitor?**
- **Flow- Who gets info first?**

SPOKESPERSON PREP

- **Skilled**
- **Trained**
- **Prepared**
- **Accessible**

HOLDING STATEMENTS

- **We are in contact with the student's family and are doing everything we can to support them.**
- **We are aware of the incident and are investigating it.**
- **We are reviewing our procedures/policies to prevent this incident from happening again.**

RELATIONSHIPS

- ❖ **Police/emergency personnel**
- ❖ **Media**
- ❖ **Community leaders & influencers**
- ❖ **Faith leaders**



During the Crisis =

Response

CRISIS COMMUNICATION



What you do in the **first 24 hours:**

- Can determine whether the crisis remains an **incident** or becomes a **full-blown crisis**
- Can make or break your **credibility**
- Can strengthen or damage your **reputation**

“THE GOLDEN HOUR”



TAKE CONTROL . . .

- **Be FIRST to control the story/news.**
- **Take responsibility.**
- **Honesty is key. No spin zone.**
- **Stick to the facts.**
- **Set out your actions and stick to them.**
- **Keep communicating.**

- ❖ **Control**
- ❖ **Concern**
- ❖ **Credibility**



KEEPING PARENTS INFORMED

- **Mass Notification Calls**
- **Text alerts**
- **App push notifications**
- **Scripts for secretaries**
- **Social media**



Everything can and most likely will be forwarded to other parents and to the media.

VOICE

- **Familiar, trusted voice**
- **30-60 seconds**
- **When/how to expect additional updates**
- **Keep staff in the loop**

TEXT

- **Character count**
- **Identify school system/school**
- **Provide link for further info**
- **Keep staff in the loop**

SOCIAL MEDIA

- **Real-time updates**
- **Reaches broader audience**
- **Direct to more substantive info**
- **Video/Live**

Leveraging **SOCIAL** media



YOU SHOULD KNOW

- **80%** of U.S. population has a social media profile.
- **67%** of adults report getting at least some of their news on social media.
- **25%** of verified users on Twitter are journalists.

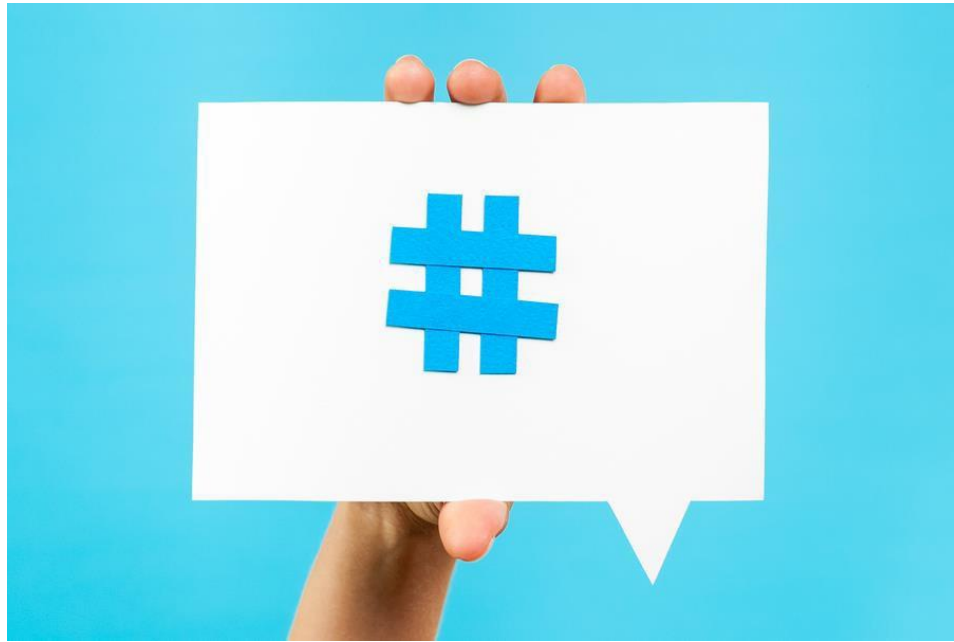


YOU SHOULD KNOW

- **94%** of parents are smartphone users.
- **93%** of parents report using social media compared to **81%** of non-parents.
- **60%** of parents under 49 years report using Facebook “all the time” or “often.”



TAG! YOU'RE IT!



A Dedicated Hashtag:

- **Keeps communications organized.**
- **Increases efficiency.**
- **Makes monitoring easier.**
- **Helps document post-crisis.**

SOCIAL MEDIA BEFORE A CRISIS

- **Establish a presence.**
- **Become go-to source for information.**
- **Find and connect with key communicators.**
- **Ensure stakeholders know official platforms.**
- **Post frequently.**

SOCIAL MEDIA DURING A CRISIS

- **Act quickly**
- **Target key list of communicators**
- **Use/adapt existing key messages**
- **Share frequent updates**
- **Keep it brief**
- **Monitor what others are saying**
- **Respond to misinformation**

SOCIAL MEDIA AFTER A CRISIS

- ❖ **Reassure stakeholders by sharing ongoing response/recovery efforts.**
- ❖ **Share results of after-crisis review.**
- ❖ **Share corrective actions planned.**

“You need to be prepared for today’s media culture, in which a tweet can become newsworthy and a news interview can become tweet-worthy.”

**– Brad Phillips of Phillips Media Relations,
a.k.a Mr. Media Training**

Dealing with the MEDIA



DEALING WITH **THE MEDIA:**

- 1. Know your objectives**
- 2. Anticipate questions**
- 3. Rehearse**

DEALING WITH **THE MEDIA:**

What reporters want

- **PRINT** – Details, background
- **TV** – Visuals, sound bytes
- **RADIO** – Sound bytes, atmosphere



COUNT ON THESE QUESTIONS:

- 1. What happened?**
- 2. Why did it happen?**
- 3. What are you doing about it?**
- 4. Who's to blame?**

PROACTIVE

- ❖ **Angle – What's next?**
- ❖ **Good news/Feel-good stories**
- ❖ **Behind the scenes**

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

- **“No comment” not an option**
- **No off the record**
- **Never lie**
- **Avoid jargon**

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

- **Focus on human aspect**
- **Show empathy**
- **Be aware of body language**
- **Remember your audience**

“In time of crisis people want to know that you care, more than they care what you know.”

- Will Rogers

HOOKS, BRIDGES & FLAGS



HOOKING

- ❖ **That's just one of the ways we are addressing XYZ ...**
- ❖ **There are two very important factors we need to take into account when ... The first is ...**

BRIDGING



FLAGGING

» LIVE
NEW YORK

CNBC EXCLUSIVE

IBM'S ROMETTY: WE ARE CHANGING THE PROFILE OF THIS COMPANY AND INDUSTRY

NASDAQ
-1.33 -0.03%
4,142.53

CNBC

What
NOT
to do



WELL, THIS IS
AWKWARD...

Flash Flood Watch
Bell



**KEN
STARR
INTERVIEW**

10 KWTX
KWTX.com
5:04
67°

THE WEATHER
AUTHORITY

Lampasas

7:00 AM
66 M Cloudy

Noon
71 Sct T-Storms

5:00 PM
73 T-Storms

**CAN WE GET A
STRAIGHT ANSWER?**

A man with short, light-colored hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue collared shirt, is speaking. He is looking slightly to his left. The background is dark, suggesting an outdoor night setting with some blurred lights and structures.

WV WATER CRISIS

LIVE

GARY SOUTHERN

PRES., FREEDOM INDUSTRIES

**What
you
SHOULD
do**



Broward County Schools Supt. Speaks to Media

PARKLAND, FL

©CBS NEWS / SPECIAL REPORT

LIVE

SUSPECT IN CUSTODY AFTER SHOOTING AT FL SCHOOL
FIRE DEPARTMENT: AT LEAST 20 INJURED



Let's Discuss

PARKLAND, FL



©CBS NEWS SPECIAL REPORT
SUSPECT IN CUSTODY AFTER SHOOTING AT FL SCHOOL
FIRE DEPARTMENT: AT LEAST 20 INJURED



Let's Discuss

PARKLAND, FL



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SUSPECT IN CUSTODY AFTER SHOOTING AT FL SCHOOL
FIRE DEPARTMENT: AT LEAST 20 INJURED



Let's Discuss

During the Crisis =

Reassurance

After the Crisis =

Recovery



MONTGOMERY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



“Go at it boldly, and you’ll find unexpected forces closing round you and coming to your aid.”

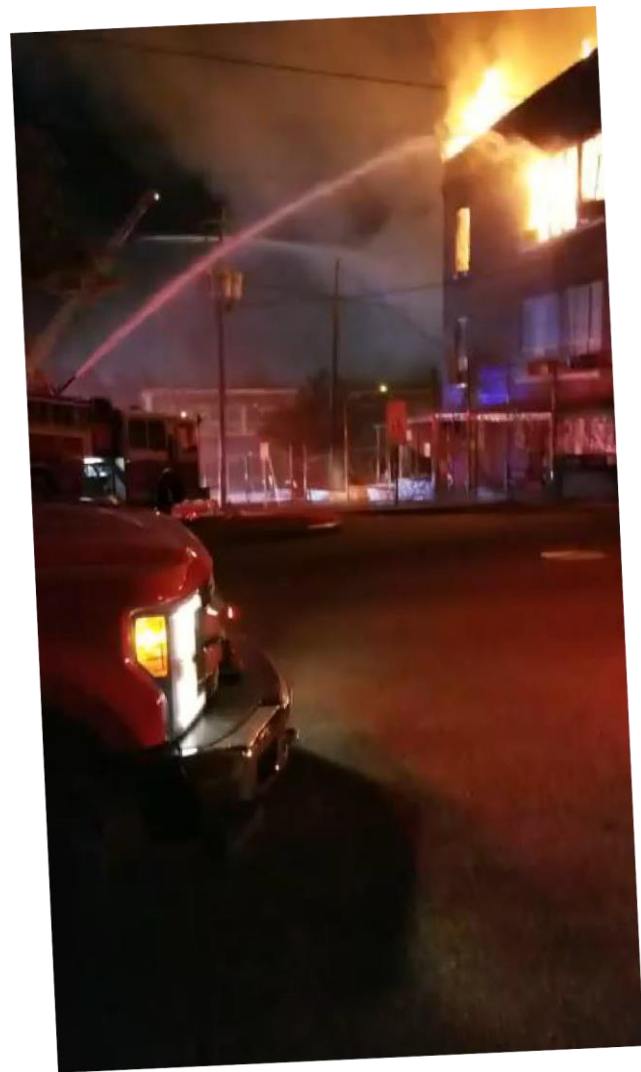
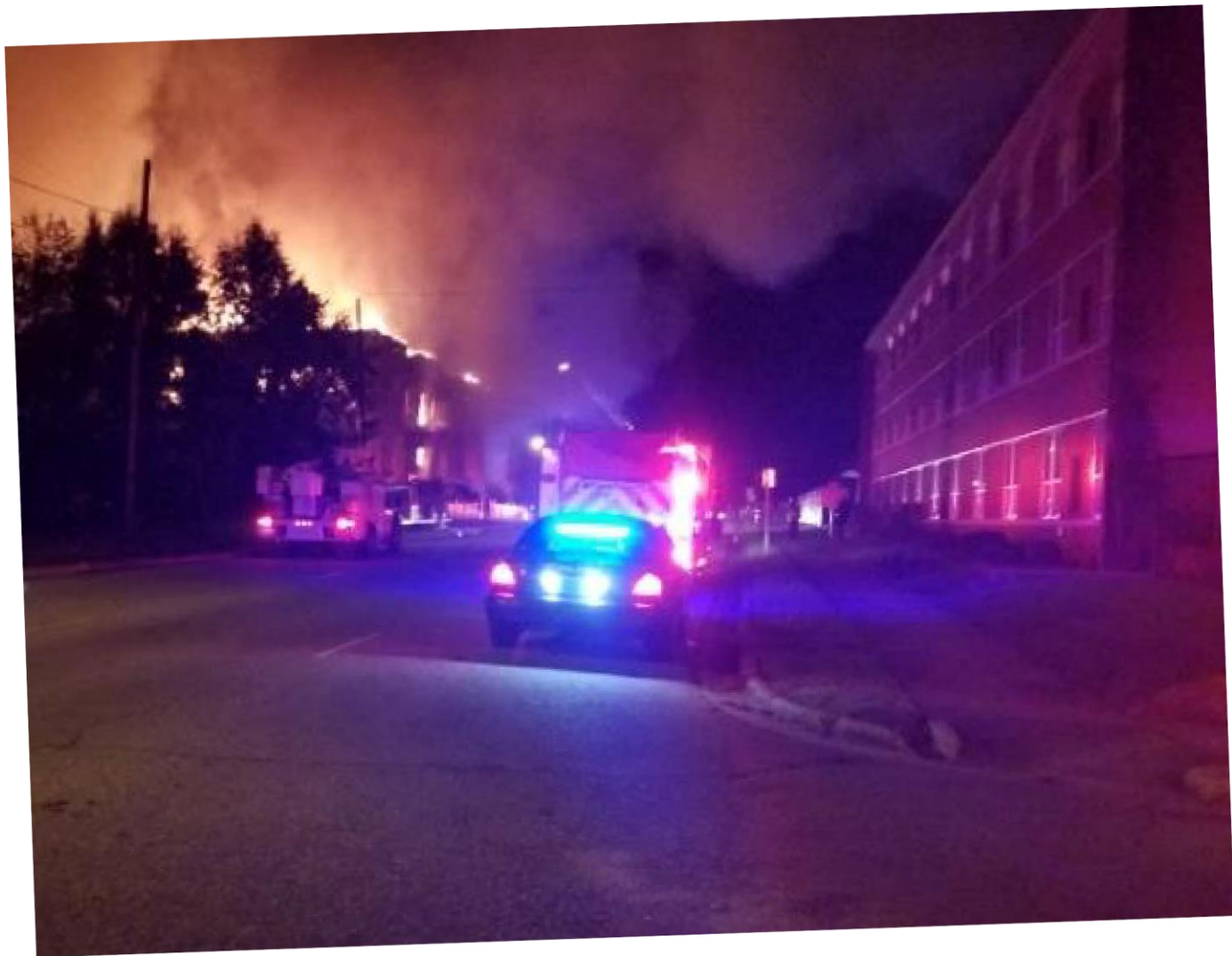
- Basil King, The Conquest of Fear



**Tom Salter, Senior Communications Director,
Montgomery Public Schools**

1

Tell your story FIRST.







2

**Openness and
honesty set the tone.**

4

**Even in bad situations,
there are good stories
to tell.**



**Act quickly and
decisively.**

6

**Use technology to
your advantage.**

f LIVE





**Keep stakeholders
informed with
frequent updates.**

BTW FIRE INFORMATION P

BTW on their first day @ the Hayneville Road ca



4 p.m.

na PTA office (470 South Union Street) is a coll
BTW students. Art supplies, drawing paper, dr
will provide a list as soon as it is complied.

for other ways to donate.

ues on the new BTW site. Items began to be m
room and the entire school interior is being pa
restrooms and other areas.



Follow-through and Follow-up.

HAYNEVILLE ROAD
Elementary **SCHOOL**

BTW RISE

FIRST DAY

“Deep within every crisis is an opportunity for something beautiful.”

- Kate McGahan



You get a crisis!

And you get a crisis!

Everybody gets a crisis!

SCENARIO EXERCISES