

The Omnicrisis in the Workplace

Building a Crisis Management Blueprint for a Volatile 2026



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AGENDA

- Introduction
- Foundations
- Credibility
- Crisis Preparation
- Crisis Response
- Postmortem

THE CURRENCY OF CREDIBILITY



INTRODUCTION

- **Why Messaging Discipline Matters**
 - 24/7 News Cycle
 - Breakdown in Traditional Media
 - Global Instability
 - Financial & Cultural Tensions
 - Political Uncertainty
 - Bipartisan “Cancel” Culture
 - Local tensions



INTRODUCTION

- **Reputational Risk as Existential**
- **Credibility as Strategic Asset**
- **GOALS:**
 - **Preparedness**
 - **Communication**
 - **Discipline**
 - **Organizational Growth**

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A close-up photograph of several lit sparklers. The sparklers are made of a golden metal wire and are emitting bright, white sparks that are falling and creating a soft glow. The background is dark with some out-of-focus blue and green lights, suggesting an outdoor night event.

INTRODUCTION

- **What's can we see in 2026?**
 - **Fractured politics**
 - **Immigration enforcement**
 - **Culture wars**
 - **High profile lawsuits on social issues**
 - **Possible military deployments**
 - **Uncertain economic conditions**
 - **Pressure to take a side**



INTRODUCTION

- Operation “Catch of the Day”
- Limits on employee speech?
- Does your organization “take a stand?”
- Impacted employees/families?



INTRODUCTION

- **HR's Role:**
 - **Maintain the Culture**
 - **Protect the entity**
 - **Employee care**
 - **Ensuring compliance in a dynamic environment**
 - **Preparation**

FOUNDATIONS

Incident vs. Issue vs. Crisis

Level	Description
Severe (Crisis)	An issue that significantly and negatively affects your company's workforce, business operations, technology, security, reputation and/or financial strength.
Serious (Issue)	Broad emerging trend or situation, either specific to the company that could impact the company's – or a part of the company's - reputation and/or business operations.
Minor (Incident)	No immediate threat to the safety or stability of the company's operations and workforce exist.

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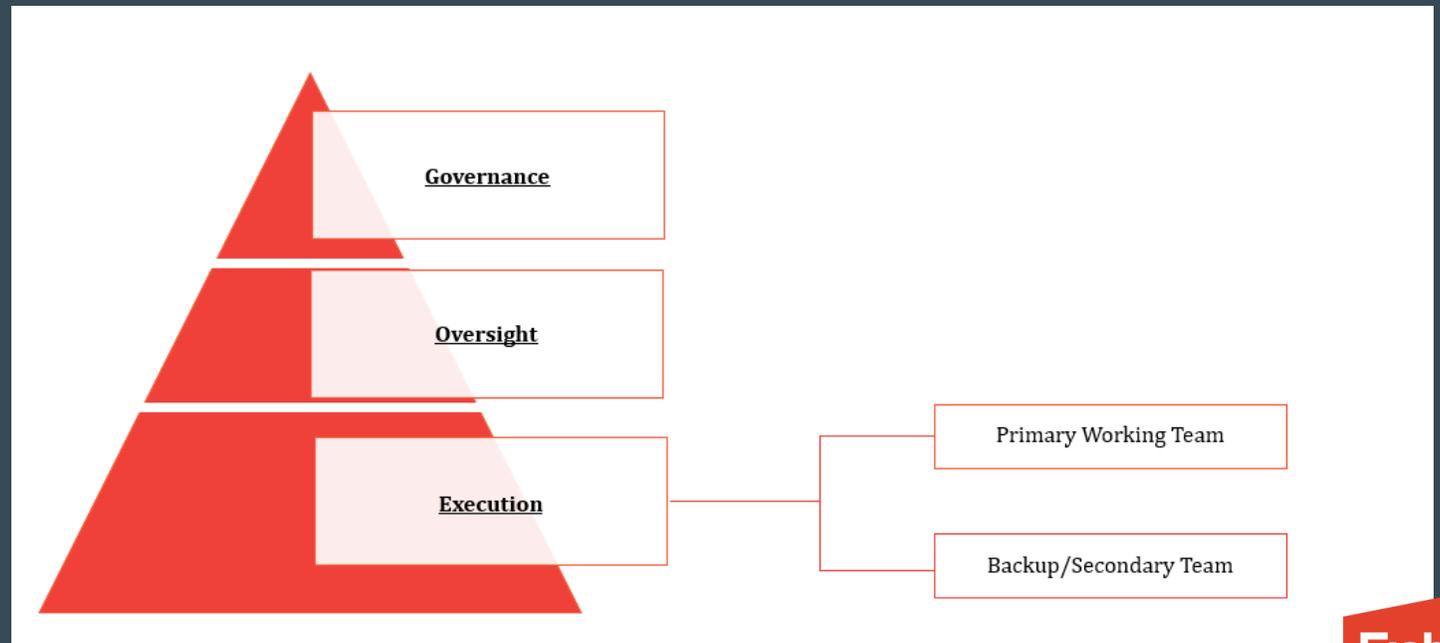
FOUNDATIONS

- **Types:**
 - **Reputational**
 - **Operational**
 - **Ethical**
 - **Legal**
 - **Immigration Raids**
 - **Digital**
 - **Safety**

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FOUNDATIONS

- Type Determines Team
- Core Structure Matters



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FOUNDATIONS

- Incident and Issue Protocols
- Incident and Issue Escalation Pathways
- Leaders Set the Tone
- HR maintains the Culture

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FOUNDATIONS

- **Maintain professional knowledge**
- **“The way it has been done”**
- **THINK** about the tension between organizational principles/priorities, employee care, and risk management

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CREDIBILITY

- **Strategic Asset**
- **Result of Sustained:**
 - **Tactical Discipline**
 - **Operational Effectiveness**

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CREDIBILITY

- **Wealth Management Approach**
 - **Deposit Early**
 - **Deposit Often**
 - **No Deposit Too Small**
 - **Don't Panic**

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CREDIBILITY

- **Credibility = Currency**
 - **Transparency**
 - **Consistency**
 - **Accountability**

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CREDIBILITY

- **Credibility is Cultural**
- **Established Pre-Crisis**
- **Commit to Culture of Radical Integrity**
- **HR Sets the Culture**

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CRISIS PREPARATION

- **Prepare Template Products**
 - Media Holding Statements
 - Press Release
 - Internal Notification
 - Stakeholder Notification
- **Prepare Feedback Systems**
- **Empower Trained Leaders**

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CRISIS PREPARATION

- **Simulate**
 - Test Team
 - Test Systems
 - Test Decision-Making Chains
- **Tabletop Exercises**
- **Reputation Seismograph**





CRISIS PREPARATION

- Every Crisis is a “People Crisis”
- HR Identifies people-centric risk
- HR knows strengths to build the “crisis team”
- Policy Alignment and Flexibility

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CRISIS PREPARATION



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CRISIS RESPONSE

- **Discipline Under Pressure**
- **When in Doubt, Lead With the Truth**
- **Pick the Right Messenger**

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CRISIS RESPONSE

- **The Three C's:**
 - **Clarity**
 - **Compassion**
 - **Consistency**
- **Templates are Not Enough**

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CRISIS RESPONSE

Silence is Not Golden (Project Azorian)



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CRISIS RESPONSE

- **Speed vs. Accuracy**
 - **First 60 minutes MATTER**
 - **Holding Statements**
 - **Update Cadence**
 - **Don't Let Perfect Be the Enemy of Good**
- **Control the Narrative by Holding the Initiative**
 - **(Reporters are Lazy)**

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CRISIS RESPONSE

- HR during crisis
 - Manage communications with internal stakeholders
 - Enforce the chain of command
 - Influences messaging
 - Employee “roll-call”
 - Training/drills
 - Payroll/Benefits
 - Succession planning

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CRISIS RESPONSE



Maintain discipline: Closely follow the agreed upon crisis management processes.



Act quickly and with purpose: Take quick, decisive steps to address issues that arise.



Work together: Stay in close contact with crisis response team members to ensure the team is acting in lockstep.



Commit to truth: Deal in facts, not assumptions or speculation. Recognize and acknowledge gaps in information to yourself and to others.



Be flexible: Realize that situation can change quickly in a crisis and be ready, able and willing to adapt when they do.

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POSTMORTEM

- **What Worked?**
- **What Didn't?**
- **Learning Culture: Accountability But Not Blame**

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POSTMORTEM

Identify the End



Continue monitoring social and traditional media



Report monthly on related conversation or issues until conversation stops completely



Continue to provide updates to internal and external stakeholders; Communicate on a regular schedule to manage expectations

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POSTMORTEM

- Assess Effects
 - Traditional Media
 - Untraditional Media
 - Social Media
 - Customers
 - Operational Data
- Build Off Of Realistic Expectations

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POSTMORTEM

- **Assess Team**
 - **Within One Month**
 - **Team Feedback**
 - **Prepare Outcome Report**
 - **Use KPI's to Maintain Objectivity**

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POSTMORTEM



- **Update**
 - **Policies**
 - **Templates**
 - **Protocols and Escalations**
 - **Team**
- **Avoid the Temptation to Retaliate**

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POSTMORTEM

- Remember your People



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QUESTIONS?

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THANK YOU!

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