



Know Your Interest Holders Worksheet

To prepare your organization to communicate effectively with your key audiences during a crisis, you need to:

- 1. Identify the impacted interest holders:** What interest holder groups do you have that are impacted or may be impacted by this crisis? For an internal crisis, you may only need to communicate with staff confidentially. For a broader community crisis, you will likely need to communicate with all interest holders.
- 2. Identify interest holder needs:** What do each of these interest holder groups need to know from you? Messaging may overlap between these groups, but there will also be specific, more catered information you share only with certain groups.
- 3. Determine your own needs:** What do you need to know from each of these interest holder groups? Do they need to adhere to special protocols, support you in amplifying your message, provide you with information?
- 4. Select the right channels and timing:** What is the best way to reach these interest holder groups? When will they be communicated with and how frequently?
- 5. Assign responsibility:** Who within your organization is responsible for coordinating and actioning that communication? Ensure the person responsible is aware of the role they play.

Examples of Interest Holder Groups

- Staff
- Visitors or Guests
- Board of Directors
- External Partners:
 - Media
 - Volunteers
 - Funders
 - Tourism agencies (local, regional, provincial)
 - Local businesses



EXERCISE

INTEREST HOLDER COMMUNICATION MATRIX

Follow the steps below to identify your interest holders and their key defining details in the Interest Holder Communication Matrix. The matrix is designed for general crisis communications planning, not dedicated to a specific crisis.

STEP 1: Use the first column to list all internal and external interest holders that your organization has. During your brainstorming, consider:

- Who is or may be directly impacted by a crisis?
- Who will help you manage or respond to the crisis?
- Who can amplify your message to broader audiences?
- Who will come to you for questions during a crisis?

STEP 2: In the second column, identify what type of information you would need to share with each interest holder during a crisis. This is all the most important information and resources you would be able to provide them. Consider the following questions:

- Are there any resources to share that are specific to the interest holder?
- Do they need messaging to amplify to their own interest holders?
- Do they need to know what your organization will be doing next or when the next update will come?
- Do they need to complete an action during a crisis? (I.e., reporting on impact of the crisis)

STEP 3: During a crisis, communication goes both ways. Using the third column, consider what your organization may need from each interest holder.

Consider:

- If you're communicating internally, consider what information you need from each of your different staff groups (i.e., Communications, HR, Finance, etc.)
- From other external agencies, consider what information they would be able to provide you (i.e., status of crisis, feedback from their interest holders, etc.)

STEP 4: Brainstorm each of the communication channels and tools you have available to your organization. In the fourth column, identify the best channel(s) or tool(s) to reach each different interest holder.

STEP 5: Using the fifth column, identify how often each of your interest holders would need updates from your organization. Internally, your staff may need more frequent updates than external audiences.

STEP 6: The final step is to assign responsibility for the communication. More important updates to partners and media will come from your organization's leadership (i.e., Executive Director, Board, CEO), whereas communications staff would be issuing social media content.





1	2	3	4	5	6
Interest Holder Group	What do they need to know? (Most important information in a crisis)	What do we need from them? (Actions, support, sharing messaging)	How will we communicate? (Preferred channels)	When/How often?	Who is responsible?
Staff	Safety procedures, updates, media process	Feedback, adherence to protocol, amplifying the holding statement	Email, in-person meetings, text message	Daily updates or as needed	Operations Manager