



Know Your Role Worksheet

INTRODUCTION

There are seven types of crises that your organization may face: financial, technological, organizational, natural, personnel, human-made or political.

Knowing your role for each crisis is critical to planning effectively, mobilizing quickly, avoiding confusing messaging, and building trust with your interest holders. In each crisis response your organization will only play one role: Lead, Support or Observe. Your job is to know what role your organization plays in each situation and what your responsibilities are.

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LEAD

The crisis is happening to your organization.

Your organization is directly responsible for the crisis and must manage the response.

Examples:

- A reputational issue with a board member or staff member.
- A crime against your organization (data breach or theft).
- An accident that impacts your staff and/or operations.
- Misinformation shared through your communication channels.

Your responsibilities include:

- Communicating quickly and clearly with your interest holders.
- Protecting your brand and guests.

Coordinating internally and externally for safety and service continuity.

SUPPORT

The crisis is happening in **your** community, region or province but directly impacts you.

You are not the lead agency, but will still play a role in managing the response.

Examples:

- An environmental event (fire, flood, landslide, etc.).
- Crime that could impact travel or tourism.
- Protests
- Pandemics
- Infrastructure failure (bridge collapse, highway sinkhole).

Your responsibilities include:

- Supporting the lead organization's communication and response efforts.
- Communicating accurate and timely updates to visitors from official sources.
- Helping mitigate impacts and ensure a return to normal operations.

OBSERVE

The crisis is not directly impacting your organization, operations, or visitors but you still need to monitor the situation and be ready to respond if the impacts grow.

Examples:

- Political policy changes (border closures, taxes etc.)
- National or international economic shifts.
- Road closures or delays.
- International incidents or travel advisories
- Negative media coverage of tourism elsewhere.

Your responsibilities include:

- Monitoring the situation closely.
- Assessing risks to your brand, operations or visitors.
- Amplifying key messages from official sources when appropriate.



EXERCISE

Identify Your Role in a Crisis

When a crisis hits, the first step is to identify the role that your organization will play: **Lead, Support or Observe.**

Beside each of the crisis types below is a sample scenario that your organization may face. Review the scenario and use the last column to identify what your organization's role would be.

When complete, use the matrix below to check your answers.

CRISIS TYPE	SAMPLE SCENARIO	YOUR ROLE (Lead, Support, Observe)
Financial	A local visitor attraction in your community has declared bankruptcy.	
Technological	Your booking system is hacked, and guest data is compromised.	
Organizational	A senior leader in your organization is accused of misconduct and it's been leaked to the media.	
Natural	Wildfires threaten key tourism areas in your region.	
Personnel	A staff member is involved in an incident on work time that attracts media attention.	
Human-made	A protest is happening in the downtown core of your community.	
Political	A federal election leads to legislative changes impacting international travel.	

Answer Key

CRISIS TYPE	REASONING	ANSWER
Financial	This crisis is not happening in your organization but still may impact some visitor experience. Your role is to Support the local attractions communication efforts.	SUPPORT
Technological	Your organization is responsible for keeping your guest data safe. Your role is to take the lead.	LEAD
Organizational	This is an HR issue involving senior leaders from your organization. Your role is to take the lead.	LEAD
Natural	This crisis is not happening in your organization but will impact visitor experience and travel. Your role is to Support the lead agency in their wildfire response communication efforts.	SUPPORT
Personnel	This incident happened to a staff member on work time, so your role is to take the lead.	LEAD
Human-made	The protest is not directed at your organization or connected to travel but could lead to impacts on visitor experience. Observe and prepare to respond if circumstances change.	OBSERVE
Political	The legislative changes may not impact your organization directly but could have impacts on the local tourism operators you support and advocate for. Observe and prepare to respond if circumstances change.	OBSERVE