



Issues and Crisis Communications

Bespoke training programme for TG4

Course Director: Niall Quinn

Introductory session

Wednesday 24th April 2024

Introduction

- ▶ Welcome comments – Áine Lally & Michelle Nic Craith, TG4
- ▶ Course administration – Frank Condon, Public Relations Institute of Ireland
- ▶ Session introduction – Niall Quinn, Course Director

Course presenter – Niall Quinn

- ▶ 25 years' experience in finance, law, communications & reputation management in executive, advisory and non-executive roles
- ▶ Recognised issues and crisis communications specialist
- ▶ Former President of Public Relations Institute of Ireland (PRII)
- ▶ Lecturer in Strategic Communications
- ▶ Course director for PRII's professional certification programme in issues and crisis communications
- ▶ Author of the LEADER™ issues and crisis response framework
- ▶ Practicing barrister
- ▶ Accredited mediator
- ▶ Experienced non-executive director including high-profile statutory bodies



Session 1 – Learning outcomes/objectives

- ▶ Have an understanding of issues and crisis definitions
- ▶ Be able to differentiate between a risk, hazard, issue/incident, crisis, emergency, major emergency and catastrophe
- ▶ Be in a position to identify some characteristics of a crisis
- ▶ Understand and differentiate the concepts of risk management, risk assessment and the application of risk assessment
- ▶ Have an appreciation of risk areas facing organisations
- ▶ Understand a framework for developing a risk register, be in a position to identify what risks should be included, how they should be categorized, ranked and scored
- ▶ Appreciate the importance of risk mitigation
- ▶ Consideration of TG4's culture regarding employees identifying risk
- ▶ Understand key considerations about the risk identification and monitoring team
- ▶ Have an appreciation of a framework for the stages of an issue or crisis

Some history

- ▶ Ivy Ledbetter Lee
- ▶ Retained by American anthracite coal industry and Pennsylvania Railroad Company in 1906
- ▶ Demanded access at highest level and got facts
- ▶ Result?
- ▶ Fair & accurate reporting



“Issues” in context

“Issues” in context

Hazard

Issue/incident

Crisis

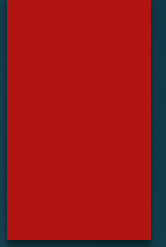
Emergency

Major emergency

Disaster

Catastrophe

Multiple terms, different meanings



Hazard

A source of danger or an extreme event that has the potential to affect people, property and the natural environment.

Damon P. Coppola – Introduction to international disaster management.

Issue/incident

A minor, localized disruption that does not disrupt the organization's routine.

Timothy W. Coombs – Ongoing crisis communication: planning, managing and responding

Crisis



A significant disruption of an organisation's normal activities that stimulates extensive media coverage and public scrutiny.

Dan Millar and Larry Smith – Crisis management and communication (International Association of Business Communicators)

Emergency

A routine adverse event that does not have community-wide impact or does not require extraordinary use of resources or procedures to bring conditions back to normal.

Thomas Drabek and Gerard Hoetmer – Emergency management: principles and practice for local government (International City Management Association US)

Major emergency

When an emergency situation overwhelms society's problem-solving resources and devastates the day-to-day lives of a great many people.

Birgitta Darrell – Crisis communication handbook (Swedish Emergency Management Agency)

Disaster

A serious disruption of the functioning of society, causing widespread human, material or environmental losses, which exceeds the ability of the affected society to cope using its own resources.

Catastrophe

A disaster that affects an entire nation and requires extraordinary resources and skills for recovery.

Thomas Drabek and Gerard Hoetmer – Emergency management: principles and practice for local government (International City Management Association US)

Characteristics of a “crisis”

- ▶ Loss of life
- ▶ Any direct or indirect threats to life or significant injury
- ▶ Environmental damage or significant threat of pollution
- ▶ Damage to property which has a significant adverse impact on infrastructure or service delivery
- ▶ Serious safety issues in respect of products or services
- ▶ Business interruption of a specified time/duration (depending on business operations)
- ▶ Adverse event or incident impacting key stakeholders (neighbouring sites, infrastructure, businesses or local community)
- ▶ A situation which can cause catastrophic harm
- ▶ Any incident which causes significant reputational damage or has the ability cause significant reputational damage unless contained, resolved or managed with assurance with a clear pathway to resolution

Risk

Risk definition

- ▶ The possibility of loss, injury, or other adverse or welcome circumstance; a chance or situation involving such a possibility

Risk perspective

A deviation from the expected – positive or negative

From a communications perspective, it's normally negative!

Risk management

The process whereby decisions are made to accept a known or assessed risk and/or the implementation of actions to reduce the consequences or probability of its occurrence.

Royal Society – Risk: analysis, perception and management

Risk management – operational environment

Importance of understanding operational environment

Where do risks emanate from?

Internal or external

What areas are within your organization's control?

What areas are not within your control?

Who do you need to partner with to increase element of control? *Stakeholder engagement*

Risk management – external factors

Social

Political

Economic

Legal

Technological

Risk management – external factors

Social

Political

Economic

Legal

Technological

Regulatory

Environmental

Risk management – external factors

Social

Political

Economic

Legal

Technological

Regulatory

Environmental

Geopolitical

Risk assessment

Technical studies that assess the risk and benefits of various risk options and provide information to decision-makers... who then make risk management decisions.

Stuart Price – Communication Studies

Applying risk assessment

The process whereby decisions are made to accept a known or assessed risk and/or the implementation of actions to reduce the consequences or probability of occurrence.

Royal Society – Risk: analysis, perception and management

Risk areas to consider

How many of you
are monitoring
these risks?

***Reputation Institute's analysis of
global crises in 1 year.**

The top 20 reputation risks Every company needs to monitor*

1	Accounting malpractices
2	Bankruptcy fraud
3	CEO resignation after a financial scandal
4	Child labour in a supplier's factory
5	Delayed reporting of defects
6	Fraud and abuse allegations
7	Homophobic comments of top management
8	Incoherent communication of corporate strategy
9	Labour strike in emerging market
10	Mandatory product recall
11	NGOs very critical against a plant
12	Price increase
13	Product fraud
14	Bribery of Public officials
15	Repeated product recalls
16	Service changes and interruption
17	Sexual harassment
18	Strong layoffs
19	Unaware utilization of toxic packaging
20	Wage Renegotiation



Risk

RISK MITIGATION

Risk mitigation

- ▶ What elements of the risk environment are too risky?
 - ▶ Consider eliminating certain processes/business areas/operations
- ▶ How can risks be mitigated?
 - ▶ Different process?

Issue avoidance – Alternative Dispute Resolution process

- ▶ Focus on mediation
- ▶ Mediation can neutralise, deescalate or delay commercial or interpersonal issues
- ▶ Alternative Dispute Resolution process
- ▶ Legal proceedings can be reported in media
- ▶ Legal proceedings have multiple stages turning the issue into an event
- ▶ Mediations conducted in private and settlement terms confidential (unless both parties agree otherwise)
- ▶ Successful outcome can lead to a joint statement with greater control over messaging (+ potential agreed statement throughout process)
- ▶ Where both parties committed to mediation process leaks and briefings can be eliminated



Risk

CATEGORISING POTENTIAL CRISES

Categorising potential crises

- ▶ Why categorise?
- ▶ How are they categorised?
- ▶ Assists with different levels/stages of protocol response
- ▶ Can move up or down level as necessary

Categorising potential crises - Airline

How we categorise potential crises:

1. Define scope of issue: ensure appropriate response
2. Categorise crisis level: Identify most suitable approach as under or over/reaction can exacerbate media/stakeholder reaction

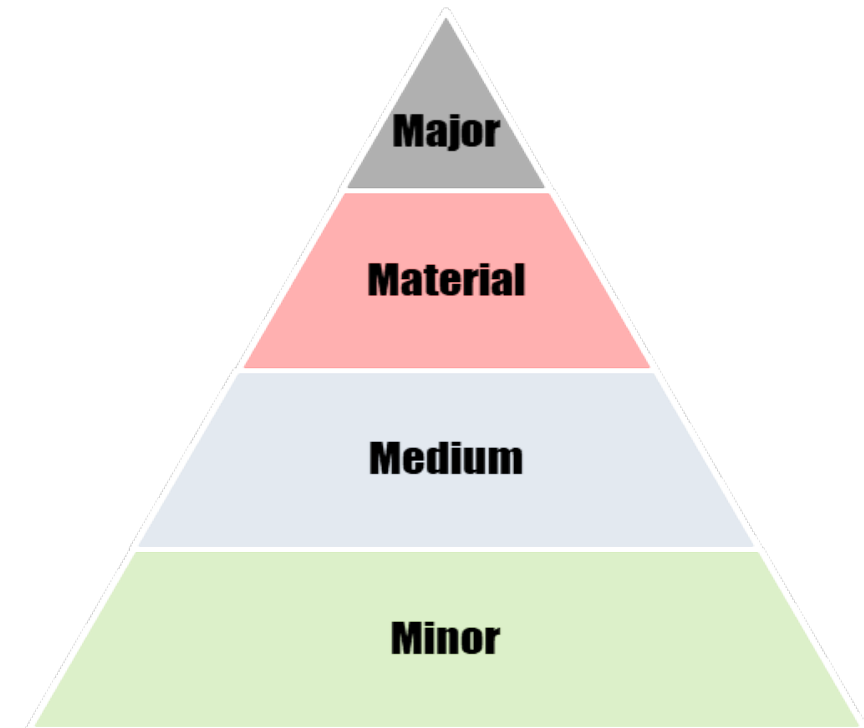
Examples of categorisation for, say, an airline would include:

BLACK – Major crisis with actual or potential loss of life (plane crash, hi-jack, serious accident on-site, major fire, release of hazardous waste etc.)

RED – Material issue (prolonged service interruption, significant legal/regulatory issue, food contamination issue on-board, pilot/cabin crew airport protest/blockade, etc.)

BLUE – Medium level issue (regulatory issue, industrial relations dispute in IR process, safety recall, data breach with no customer details released etc.)

GREEN – Minor issue (minor accident on site, small issue with staff/supplier)



Categorising potential crises - benefits

- ▶ Sets the tone of the response
- ▶ Identifies stakeholders who need to be engaged with
- ▶ Assists with identifying and managing other aspects of the organisation not directly impacted

Categorising potential crises for TG4

- ▶ Group/individual exercise
- ▶ Set out template for your own business/operational area
- ▶ BLACK
- ▶ RED
- ▶ BLUE
- ▶ GREEN



Risk

RISK REGISTER

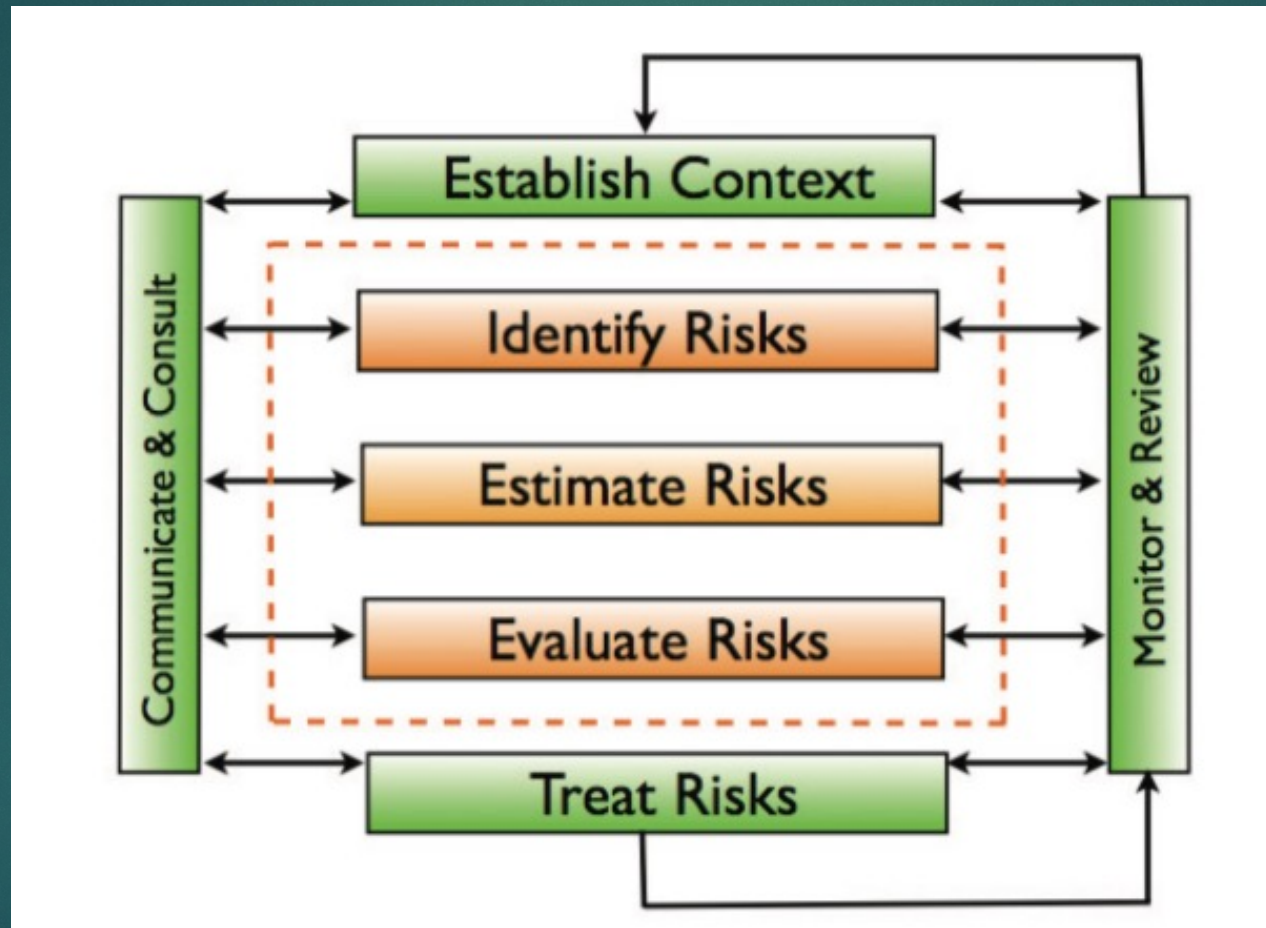
Risk register

- ▶ Map all risk areas and develop Risk Register
- ▶ Assign likelihood of risk event and likely impact and focus on areas of most importance
- ▶ Assign responsibility for Risk within the organisation
- ▶ Ensure Risk is a standing item on agenda for every business unit
- ▶ Run crisis simulation exercises for risks that are both most likely to happen and will result in greatest impact
- ▶ Aim for best practice in everything you do
- ▶ Link to CSR/ESG – it makes for good business sense to do things right
- ▶ Alternative perspective
- ▶ Shortcuts are issues waiting to happen
- ▶ Conscious and deliberate shortcuts will sow the seeds of a crisis

Risk – Link with CSR/ESG – Benefits

- ▶ Operational and reputational risk mitigation
- ▶ Supply chain risks (human rights abuses)
- ▶ Operational risks (regulatory compliance)
- ▶ Product risks (waste created during production & health and safety)
- ▶ Generate goodwill capital
- ▶ Demonstrating greater transparency
- ▶ Demonstrating how operations (supply chain) has been developed mindful of socially and environmentally responsible practices
- ▶ Shows fair treatment in their supplier relationships.

Risk management - framework



Risk register - development

- ▶ Buy-in at the most senior level
- ▶ Needs cross-functional, multi-disciplinary input
- ▶ Requires centralised ownership at highest level
AND localised co-operation
- ▶ Benefits from organisation-wide externally facilitated participation for initial identification of key risks
- ▶ Developed over time and constantly reassessed
- ▶ Standing risk team with regular meetings to co-ordinate and update
- ▶ Standing item on all organisation agendas
- ▶ Risk identification and mitigation imbedded as core value

Risk register



Worksheet									
No.	Description of Risk	Area/ Division	Impact	Likelihood	Control rating	Risk Score	Planned Response	Mitigation/ controls	Risk Owner
			1 = minor 2 = significant 3 = v significant	1 = may occur 2 = likely 3 = very likely	1 - fully under control 2 - somewhat controlled 3 - poor/inability to control	1-4 = Low 5-11 = Medium 12-27 = High red alert			
1		Flight operations	3	1	2	6			
2		HR	2	2	3	12			
3		IT	2	3	3	18			

Hospital – sample risks

- ▶ Contamination of medication/food/oxygen
- ▶ Hostage situation with staff/patients
- ▶ Misdiagnosis of patient leading to death/serious injury
- ▶ Incorrect treatment/dosage
- ▶ Cyber attack
- ▶ Data breach
- ▶ Unauthorised and inappropriate access of patient files
- ▶ Death of patients
- ▶ Industrial relations issues
- ▶ Misappropriation of funds
- ▶ Kidnapping of patient/child
- ▶ Assault/mistreatment of vulnerable patients
- ▶ Impersonation of healthcare worker
- ▶ Hazardous material issue

TG4 – what risks?

- ▶ Group/individual exercise
- ▶ Identify potential risks in your own business/unit/operational area

Risk – reputational risk

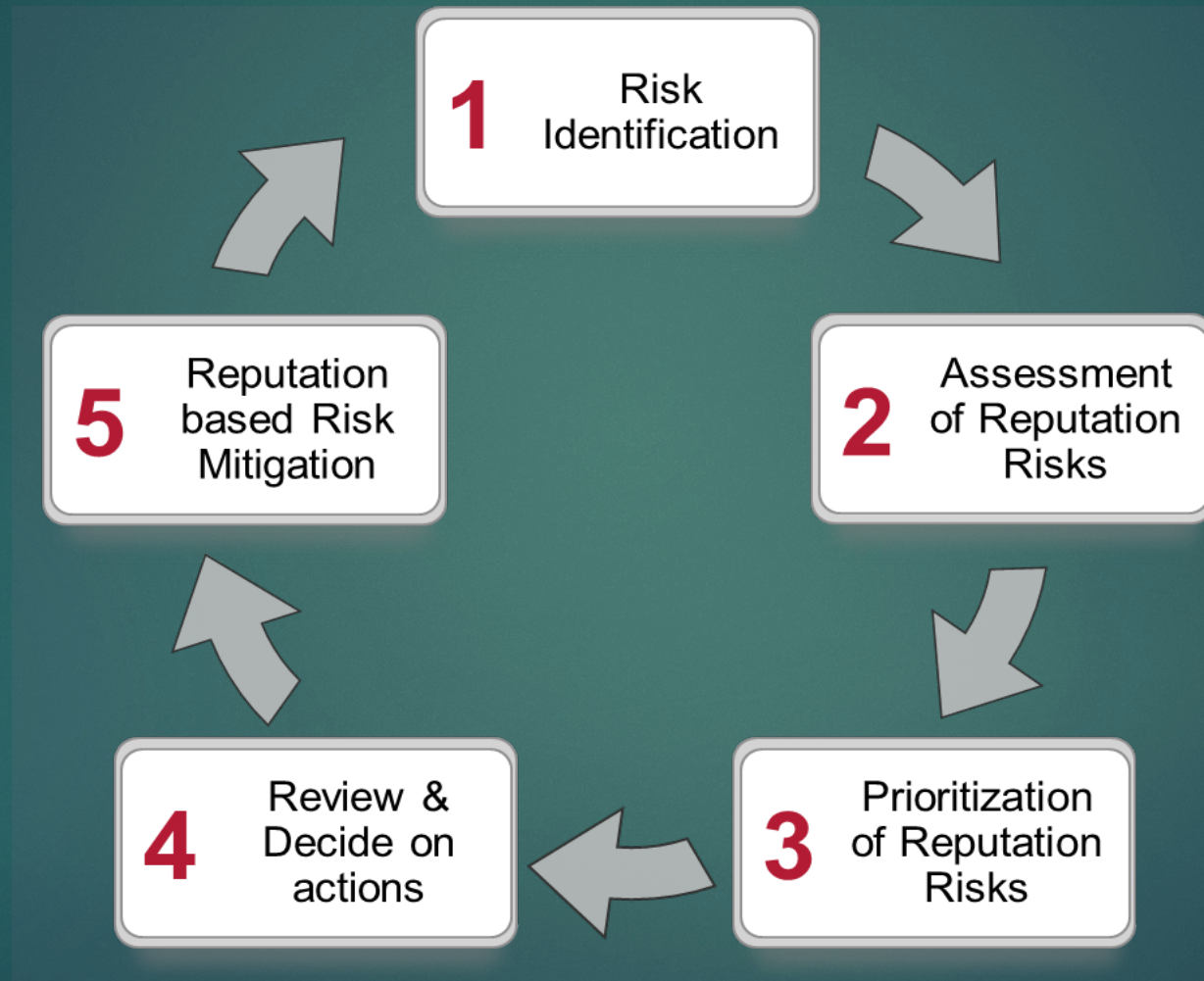
What it is?

A reputation risk is a **potential negative event...**

...that impacts stakeholders' **perception and behaviour...**

...and ultimately impacts on **business results**

Risk – Managing reputational risk





Risk

Risk identification and monitoring team

Risk identification and monitoring team

- ▶ One key lead per division/division/site/function/discipline
- ▶ Three representatives per division/division/site/function/discipline
- ▶ Senior, mid-level and junior
- ▶ Creates awareness at all levels and provides alternates for meetings etc.
- ▶ Role of external consultants, key stakeholders

Risk identification and monitoring team

- ▶ Key that there is awareness of both physical and reputational risks

OPERATIONAL RISKS

- ▶ Technical risks can be easier to identify and solutions and can be easier to seek forgiveness for

CULTURAL RISKS

- ▶ Bribery, corruption, behavioural risk are not normally considered by those in technical areas

REPUTATION

- ▶ Reputational risks are more easily disguised, are a more difficult and long-term fix and more difficult to recover from



Risk

Risk identification/monitoring/mitigation culture

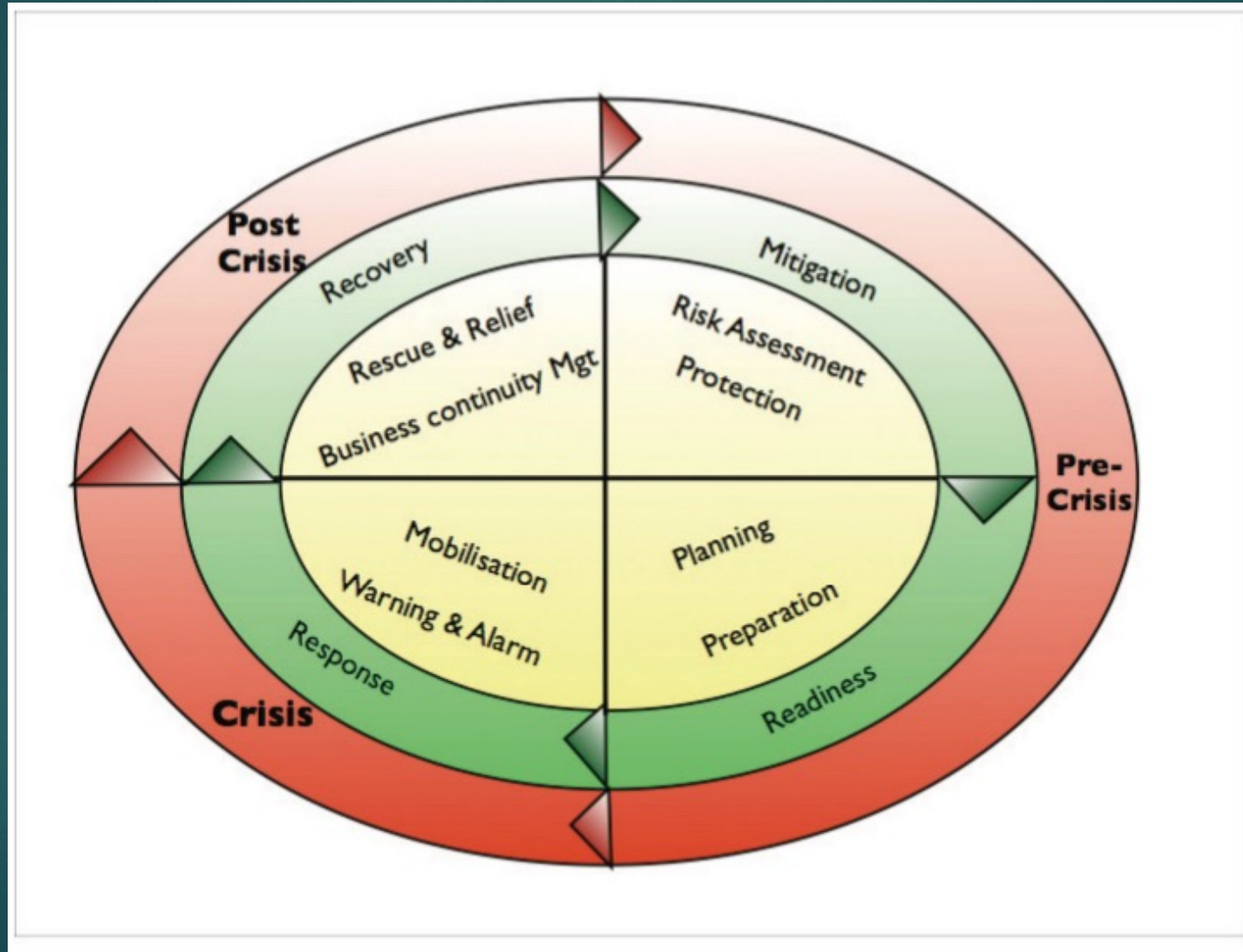
Risk identification/monitoring/mitigation culture

- ▶ What is the culture in TG4 regarding speaking up about potential risks?
- ▶ What work needs to be done to foster an openness to consider risks?
- ▶ What are the alternatives to a positive and open culture on risk?
 - ▶ Leaks
 - ▶ Tip offs
 - ▶ Whistle blowers
 - ▶ Protected Disclosures (Amendment) Act 2022
- ▶ Can be internal or external



Some issues/crisis considerations

Issue/crisis stages



Crisis response pillars

- ▶ 3 priority Ps – Safeguarding, **P**eople, **P**lace and **P**roperty
- ▶ Process – Activating incident plans – Roles and responsibilities
- ▶ Stabilise – Stabilising the situation as quickly as possible
- ▶ Solve – Addressing the issue at the core of the problem
- ▶ Communicate – Communicating appropriately with key stakeholders
- ▶ BAU – Returning to normal at the earliest opportunity with safety, stability at its core
- ▶ Mind the team! – Crisis can endure for some days – transition from sprint to marathon

Back to basic principles

Public Relations Transfer Process – Frank Jefkins

Negative Situation

Hostility

Prejudice

Apathy

Ignorance

Positive

Sympathy

Acceptance

Interest

Knowledge

Resilience

The capacity to cope with unanticipated dangers after they have become manifest.

Bouncebackability!

Radio interview

“In a crisis – if you hide or lie your reputation will die. It’s just that simple.”

Interview with Niall Quinn

Radio: RTÉ Radio One

Show: Morning Ireland

Segment: Morning Business News



“

“My personal advice is 'if you hide or lie, your reputation will die' – it's just that simple in a crisis,” said Niall Quinn, Deputy Managing Director of The Reputations Agency. “Don't let an issue become a crisis, often through inaction something that can be dealt with as an issue can very quickly escalate into a full-blown crisis.”

<https://www.rte.ie/news/business/2016/0905/814255-morning-business-news/>

<https://www.rte.ie/radio/radioplayer/html5/#/radio1/21048036>

Insight: Senior Garda – emergency management

- ✓ Investment in good planning, consideration of ‘what ifs’
- ✓ Information management
 - ✓ Sources of information (internal and external [incl. open source])
 - ✓ Fact checking and disinformation mitigation key
- ✓ Team
 - ✓ Balance of experience on team – not always the most senior
 - ✓ Note taker role key
- ✓ Decision making
 - ✓ Consideration of potential bias
 - ✓ Importance of recording what information was available/not available when decisions made
- ✓ Resilience and stress management
 - ✓ Proper rest and breaks aids decision making
 - ✓ Professional support required for team members adversely impacted
- ✓ Importance of debrief

Session 1 – Learning outcomes/objectives

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Questions and answers

Session 1 – reflection and developmental work

- ▶ Reflective journal on own experience of issue or crisis
 - ▶ Your own role
 - ▶ How prepared were you?
 - ▶ How did you perform?
 - ▶ What did you learn?
 - ▶ What would you do differently?

Session 1 – reflection and developmental work

- ▶ Risk identification structure and culture developed
- ▶ Risks Register completed/reviewed
- ▶ Potential issues and crises scenarios identified based on likelihood and impact
- ▶ Risk mitigation commenced
- ▶ Developmental work to be co-ordinated by Comms/HR function