

**Simple Crisis Communications Tips During High-Value, High-Stress Situations
Particularly in Times of Uncertainty**

What Customers and Employees Need to Know...

When There's a Vacuum People Will Fill in the Blanks on Their Own...(or shop somewhere else)

When there's a lack of communication and information, bad things happen. There's a life cycle of disaster, especially during uncertainty, and in high-stress situations.

- At first there is shock
- But unfortunately – then comes paralysis and inaction
- Then employees begin to ask what is going on
- Then they begin to demand that something happen
- Then the general public begins to ask what is going on
- Then they begin to demand that something happen immediately

Somewhere, in the midst of it you begin to lose credibility, regardless of your product. By then it's too late, your corporate values are in question, and you have a business crisis that has been magnified tenfold. You become extremely vulnerable.

You must have a constant and steady cadence of communication that shows your company has an understanding of the situation and how your key audiences are feeling. You may not have all the answers but at least you are doing something valuable and meaningful -- keeping your two largest and most important communities up to date: your employees and your customers.

Your customers need to know if you are:

- Open for business
- Have made changes because of the crisis (adjusted your hours?)
- Have reduced or added products (how is inventory?)
- Offering delivery, or pick-up option (what are the details?)
- Have special discounts or new services during this time
- and most importantly, facing the challenges ahead intelligently, thoughtfully, and meaningfully

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