



## Module 28 – LEADERSHIP IN TIME OF CRISIS

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The Leadership Academy is a learning and action programme for mayors, senior officials and elected representatives of local government.

May 2020



Centre of Expertise for  
Good Governance



# 1 CONTENT

<b>2</b>	<b>MODULE OVERVIEW</b> .....	<b>3</b>
2.1	BACKGROUND .....	3
2.2	AIM OF THE MODULE.....	3
2.3	PLANNED OUTCOMES: .....	3
2.4	DURATION .....	3
<b>3</b>	<b>MODULE STRUCTURE</b> .....	<b>4</b>
3.1	ACTIVITY 1 – INTRODUCTION.....	4
3.2	ACTIVITY 2 – CLEARWATER ROLE PLAY EXERCISE .....	4
3.3	ACTIVITY 3 – PLANNING A RESPONSE STRATEGY FOR CLEARWATER .....	5
3.4	ACTIVITY 4 – DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR CLEARWATER.....	5
3.5	ACTIVITY 5 – ROLES OF LOCAL LEADERS IN LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL CRISES .....	5
3.6	ACTIVITY 6 - EXCHANGING LOCAL CRISIS MANAGEMENT INSTRUMENTS AND EXPERIENCES DURING THE COVID-19 .....	6
3.7	ACTIVITY 7 – DRAWING CONCLUSIONS.....	6
<b>4.</b>	<b>WORKING DEFINITIONS</b> .....	<b>7</b>
4.1.	CRISIS .....	7
4.2.	CRISIS RESPONSE .....	7
4.3.	CRISIS COMMUNICATION .....	7
4.4.	STAKEHOLDERS .....	7
<b>5</b>	<b>KEY CONCEPTS</b> .....	<b>8</b>
5.1.	TYPES OF CRISIS .....	8
5.2.	THE CHALLENGE LEADERS FACE.....	8
5.3.	KEY PRINCIPLES FOR CRISIS RESPONSE .....	8
5.4.	STAKEHOLDERS .....	9
5.5.	LEGITIMACY AND TRUST.....	9
5.6.	TAKING RESPONSIBILITY .....	9
5.7.	THE FOUR RS.....	9
5.8.	KEY TASKS OF LEADERS.....	10
5.9.	ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS .....	10
5.10.	THE FIRST-MOVER ADVANTAGE .....	11
5.11.	PRINCIPLES OF CRISIS COMMUNICATION.....	11
<b>6.</b>	<b>EXERCISE HANDOUTS</b> .....	<b>13</b>
6.1.	HANDOUT 1: CLEARWATER SCENARIO AND ROLES FOR ACTIVITY 2 .....	13
6.2.	HANDOUT 2: PLANNING RESPONSE STRATEGY FOR ACTIVITY 3 .....	17
6.3.	HANDOUT 3: CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR ACTIVITY 4 .....	18
6.4.	HANDOUT 4: TRAINER’S GUIDE FOR THE CLEARWATER EXERCISE FOR ACTIVITY 2-4 .....	19
6.5.	HANDOUT 5: CRISIS RESPONSE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ACTIVITY 5.....	20
6.6.	HANDOUT 6: ED KLOTZBIER’S ADVICE ON PREPARING FOR CRISIS FOR ACTIVITY 7 .....	21
	<b>RELEVANT MATERIAL, BOOKS AND PAPERS FOR FURTHER READING</b> .....	<b>22</b>

## 2 MODULE OVERVIEW

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### 2.1 BACKGROUND

A crisis is an unpredictable or unexpected event that has potentially negative outcomes on local life, services, reputation, or the credibility of decision makers or staff of the local government and requires timely and effective response to reduce damage.

Crises are inevitable and can have strong and long-term negative consequences on the community. They can also lead to loss of public trust in local government. Crises are often defining points in the life and career of a leader as well. If a leader can respond to the crisis adequately, he/she can make huge gains in legitimacy, reputation and trust. If the leader fails to respond effectively, he/she can lose trust and support. People usually rapidly forget events or emergencies adequately treated but rarely forget when they have felt neglected in crisis because leaders did not care; or could not handle the situation.

This module educates local leaders how they can prepare their local governments to act fast and consistently during crises, and how they can take timely steps in a crisis situation in order to maintain trust and legitimacy. In the first half of the module, leaders plan the response for a hypothetical crisis, discuss strategies and their consequences and receive guidelines for planning effective action and communication. In the second half of the module, participants analyse local leadership roles in national and global crises, share their experiences and practices, including the ones gained during the Covid-19 pandemic, and learn how to prepare for other possible emergencies.

### 2.2 AIM OF THE MODULE

The aim of the module is to prepare leaders for their responsibilities in the time of crisis by:

- giving an insight into the psychological underpinnings of crisis management and crisis communication;
- discussing the key principles of crisis response;
- using a hypothetical case for practicing problem analysis, developing strategies to reduce escalation and damage, making stakeholder mapping and planning crisis communication;
- sharing experiences and good practices; and
- offering guidance to leaders on how to prepare their organisations to effectively respond to crisis situations in the future.

### 2.3 PLANNED OUTCOMES:

By the end of the module, participants will have a deeper understanding of crisis response strategies. They will learn how to:

- prepare municipalities for crisis response;
- maintain emotional and cognitive discipline as a leader during the time of crisis;
- collect fragmented information and set up an effective crisis team;
- conduct rigorous analysis of response options and potential consequences;
- deal and communicate with stakeholders; and
- adjust action strategies to evolving circumstances.

They will apply problem, stakeholder and policy analysis methods, and collect experience on the effects of unsynchronised understanding and/or action in crisis management and the outcomes of effective and/or mistaken crisis management processes.

### 2.4 DURATION

- 450 minutes

## 3 MODULE STRUCTURE

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The primary aim of the module is to educate leaders and the institutions they represent (institutional leadership) to deal with local crises and emergencies where they have the responsibility to make decisions and plan and lead the process of response to the crisis. Although local emergency response is in the focus, we also discuss experiences and potential roles of local leaders in national or global crises, like Covid-19, explaining the duties that the local leader may be responsible for within his/her area/level of authority.

The one-day long training is built on two pillars: one is the work on a hypothetical crisis scenario, the second is a facilitated sharing of experiences and good local practices during the Covid-19 epidemic. In the first part of the hypothetical scenario exercise, participants discuss the scenario in the frame of a role-play. In the second part of this exercise, they develop a response strategy and in the third part they work on a communication plan for informing different stakeholder groups. In each session and each part of the exercise, participants receive guidance, learn to apply suggested methods, reflect on their experience, and at the end receive some additional information about effective crisis response options and typical misconceptions and mistakes.

The hypothetical scenario is intended to teach participants the cornerstones of effective crisis response and show them how to develop strategies and communication plans. After this structured learning process, participants enrich their understanding by discussing local roles in national or global crises, like the Covid-19, and share their experiences and good practices.

### 3.1 ACTIVITY 1 – INTRODUCTION

The module starts with sharing experience in small groups. Participants share their experiences in local crisis and emergency situations, and in global emergencies, like the Covid-19 pandemic. The task in each group is to reflect on the characteristics of emergencies, and on the difference between the role of local leadership in a local crisis and in national or global emergencies. Based on the stories that group members shared, they list the characteristics of crises and attempt to agree on a definition for crisis and emergency situations. After the small group discussions, in a plenary session, the whole group agrees on a shared definition of crisis.

### 3.2 ACTIVITY 2 – CLEARWATER ROLE PLAY EXERCISE

Participants are divided in groups of 7. They receive a scenario of a local environmental crisis and roles they can play in the first and second part of the Clearwater exercise. (That is: activities described in chapters 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4)

Under the guidance of the Mayor, those whom the Mayor invites to consult, make a decision about the first response to a local environmental crisis. The first responses of the groups are presented and discussed in a plenary session.

After the role play exercise, the trainer presents the key principles of response to a crisis referring as much as possible to the previous discussion. This closing presentation summarizes the cornerstones of a basic approach and clarifies key do's and don'ts in the first hours/days of an emergency situation.

Detailed guidance for trainers about the process is in Handout 4, to be found in chapter 6.4.

### 3.3 ACTIVITY 3 – PLANNING A RESPONSE STRATEGY FOR CLEARWATER

Participants go back to their groups keeping the roles they played in Activity 2 (described in chapter 3.2). Each small group works as a task force that develops a response strategy following the steps given in handout 2 (to be found in chapter 6.2). Strategies developed by the small groups are discussed and compared in a plenary session. After the discussion, the trainer summarizes the key considerations for the leadership in time of crisis referring as much as possible to the previous discussion.

### 3.4 ACTIVITY 4 – DEVELOPING A COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR CLEARWATER

This session starts with a plenary discussion where participants identify stakeholder groups in the local community. They discuss who belongs to groups with specific needs and limitations in the time of an environmental crisis like the Clearwater contamination. After the plenary reporting on the result of the stakeholder mapping, the trainer encourages participants to reflect on whether stakeholders in the contamination case in Clearwater should be grouped differently than e.g. in a local development planning process or during the Covid-19 epidemic.

After the plenary discussion, participants form new groups, and are not in their previous roles anymore. (They are divided in new groups so as they can better step out of their roles.) They work as members of the task force that develops the communication plan for the first days of the crisis.

Each group works on a communication plan for a different stakeholder group with the help of the worksheet distributed (chapter 6.3. Handout 3). The groups have to identify the content of communication, list specific units (nuggets) of information and find the best channels to communicate with the given stakeholder group.

The plenary discussion focuses on similarities and differences in the communication plans. On the one hand, the groups agree what are the common content elements and the key communication channels. On the other hand, participants discuss the differences in the needs of stakeholder groups, including the need of information, baseline knowledge, and effective communication channels for different groups.

### 3.5. ACTIVITY 5 – ROLES OF LOCAL LEADERS IN LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL CRISES

During the previous activities, working on the Clearwater scenario, participants had an opportunity to learn, apply and discuss the most important tasks in crisis response. In the frame of the next three activities, they reflect on the difference between the responsibilities of local leaders/municipalities in local and national or global crises and share their good practices.

First, participants individually respond to the questionnaire regarding local leadership tasks in local, national and global crises (Handout 5. in Chapter 6.5). Then, they form small groups and discuss only the components of the questionnaire where their opinions diverge. During the closing plenary discussion, they share the opinions they formed as a group on these diverging issues.

In this exercise, the key learning is that in national and global emergencies cooperation among levels of government and different stakeholders is crucial for reducing negative consequences. Local leaders and organisations need to be committed implementers of national strategies. Participants should understand that although key strategic decisions fall beyond the responsibility of local leaders, effective local implementation is still a complex challenge and the principles discussed during the debriefing of the Clearwater exercise, are equally pertinent.

### 3.6. ACTIVITY 6 - EXCHANGING LOCAL CRISIS MANAGEMENT INSTRUMENTS AND EXPERIENCES DURING THE COVID-19

In small groups, participants discuss how they have built up local communication and support channels and instruments during the Covid-19. They are encouraged to share the biggest challenges they encountered and seek advice from peers how to overcome those challenges. This discussion leads to sharing good practices. The working groups select the most important and innovative practices and bring them to the plenary in order to share them with all participants.

### 3.7. ACTIVITY 7 – DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this last activity is to learn how can municipalities prepare for crisis response. It begins with a plenary discussion whether municipalities had any preparation for crisis intervention before

the Covid-19 epidemic and what has already been set up during the Covid-19.

In the second part of the activity participants discuss in small groups what should they do when the Covid-19 lock down ends, so as they can easily reactivate the institutional solutions, networks, communication channels when a new crisis starts. They also discuss whether they should do any other preparatory steps for future crisis management activities.

Then, participants receive a handout (Handout 6 in Chapter 6.6.) with the advice of Ed Klotzbier, an influential crisis management expert who has consulted many famous political leaders. After reading the handout, participants compare the key points suggested by Klotzbier with the key conclusions from their previous discussion and think which of those could be relevant for their own work in their own municipalities.

In a closing round, participants are invited to share some of the activities they will initiate in their own municipalities after the training.

## 4. WORKING DEFINITIONS

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### 4.1. CRISIS

#### Crisis

- Unpredictable events that have potentially negative outcomes, on local life, services, reputation and require timely and effective response to contain damage.
- Situations when:
  - something unexpected happened or was revealed;
  - that caused high stress, risks for the successful management of the local community, and uncertainty;
  - drastically interfering with normal life and operation in the local community;
  - jeopardising public trust and positive public image of the local leadership and/or the local community in general.

### 4.2. CRISIS RESPONSE

Activities that in a crisis situation aim to contain, minimise and manage harm/damage and maintain reputation, trust, confidence through effective action and communication.

We use the term crisis response referring to coordinated crisis management action and crisis communication.

### 4.3. CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Crisis communication is a subset of crisis response that focuses on engaging stakeholders in order to maintain, restore, or enhance trust and confidence when something goes wrong. It involves planning for potential crises and responding to various audiences by sending messages, engaging with stakeholders and collecting feedback.

### 4.4. STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders are all those persons and groups who have a stake in the event or its outcomes. (see more on stakeholders below in 5.4)

## 5 KEY CONCEPTS

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### 5.1. TYPES OF CRISES

We defined crises as unpredictable events that have potentially negative outcomes, on local life, services, reputation and require timely and effective response to contain damage.

Crisis situations range from major natural, or manmade disasters (e.g. epidemic, flood, fire, terrorist attack or chemical contamination), the breakdown of essential services, to potential revelation of a human error or misconduct, or rumours that seriously harm legitimacy of the leadership or the local government. Although these are very different situations, in this short note we cannot discuss each of them separately. Instead, we focus on their common characteristics and on strategies that are applicable for all.

### 5.2. THE CHALLENGE LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP FACE

In crisis situations, whatever the source of crisis may be, leadership needs to respond timely and effectively to reduce damage. Therefore, the leaders have to rapidly set up a team that can collect information, analyse options, develop proposals for response and implement it promptly.

For this, leaders need to remain calm, think clearly and understand risks and stakeholders' concerns. For this, they need personal bravery, courage and emotional discipline.

Leaders need to make principled decisions and act as consistently and transparently as possible. It is

however crucial that decisions are taken in consultation with the team which, in turn, acts collectively and in a synchronised manner.

### 5.3. KEY PRINCIPLES FOR CRISIS RESPONSE<sup>1</sup>

1. Leaders need to take responsibility for the community. Regardless of where the blame may lay, taking responsibility among other things, means to name the problem, explore possible consequences and get people to focus on a solution rather than to simply point fingers, shift blame or spin the situation for their advantage.
2. With effective action and communication leadership needs to reduce or mitigate damage, and maintain or restore legitimacy and trust. Legitimacy and trust are essential in crises to maintain public order, act, gain support, and ensure cooperation of the community. Without trust in the leadership, in time of crisis, people tend to act instinctively, focusing on perceived egoistic interests. This can lead to chaos and make an effective crisis response difficult.
3. The leadership needs to be fast, honest, transparent and respectful in crisis communication. Denying, neglecting, blaming or spinning are strategies that are not only unethical but also counterproductive. They create complicated tasks for the crisis team, confuse stakeholders and sooner or later lead to loss of trust.
4. The leadership needs to analyse stakeholders and find the adequate

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<sup>1</sup> Based on ideas of Garcia, Helio Fred: The Agony of Decision: Mental Readiness and Leadership in a Crisis. Logos Institute. Best Practices Series Book 1. 2017



channels and messages for establishing effective communication with all audiences.

5. Culture also matters in response to crisis. Humility allows the leader and other members of the institutional leadership to listen to perspectives of others and an organisational structure and culture that can convey information help the leader to have partners to face the challenges.

## 5.4. STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders are all those persons and groups who have a stake in the event or its outcomes. In crisis management and communication, the words stakeholders and audiences are often used interchangeably. Stakeholder implies more the need, interest and resource dimension of persons and groups, audience refers more to the information and communication dimension of the relation between leaders/governments and communities.

Stakeholders have different needs and resources that they can mobilise for themselves, organisations and/or their families. They can also have different values, habits, levels of understanding and education. They often develop different perceptions and understanding of the crisis situation. This is why during crises, for effective action and communication stakeholder groups have to be analysed, and their specific needs, limitations and resources mapped.

## 5.5. LEGITIMACY AND TRUST

Legitimacy and trust are always important for leadership in a community and its governance. In time of crisis they are crucial and at risk. In the practice of leadership, “legitimacy” refers to stakeholders’ perception of a leader’s or

organisation’s behaviour. When the community perceives local government as acting appropriately, it considers it legitimate. In crisis, legitimacy can be lost when stakeholders feel that the leadership fails to take responsibility and act effectively.

## 5.6. TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

The most important responsibility of the leaders is to focus on the community: the community’s interest should guide the action and not the leader’s or organisation’s interest. This needs to be clearly communicated. Community focus should be maintained in each message because it shows that the leadership cares and deserves trust.

An additional obvious message is that the leadership acts according to legal and regulatory requirements and in line with its own statements of values and aims. Everything else is context specific.

Keeping these principles, it can still be a dilemma to determine what could be the scope of action for the benefit of the community. What should leaders take responsibility for. Crisis management experts give a simple guidance for such dilemmas: Leaders should ask the question: “what would reasonable people appropriately expect that a reasonable public organisation would do?”

## 5.7. THE FOUR RS<sup>2</sup>

The four Rs - Relationships, Reputation, Responsibility, Response, are key determinants of effective crisis management.

- Relationship refers to the connection between the leadership and stakeholders.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Zambera’ 4Rs: Alana Jay Zambera: Crisis communication: Theory and Practice. London-New York: Routledge. 2010. p.43

- Reputation refers to the extent to which the leadership is seen as legitimate.
- Responsibility refers to the extent to which the stakeholders consider the organisation responsible for the crisis.
- Response refers to how the organisation has responded to the crisis in terms of its behaviour and communication efforts.

The four Rs are in a complex and mutually reflexive relation. Responsibility impacts reputation and they together impact relationship. Relationship may affect stakeholders' perception of the response. In turn, that affects reputation and relationship.

## 5.8. KEY TASKS OF LEADERS

The first task is before the crisis. Leaders have to prepare for crises:

- by developing relationships with internal and external organisational audiences;
- anticipating potential crises, and considering, how to address types of crises that can be anticipated;
- create guidelines for crisis-responses.

In crisis, they have to develop strategies for effective action in order to contain damage and maintain trust and legitimacy. For this, it is necessary to:

- define and name the problem;
- analyse the potential consequences and their impact on different stakeholders;
- determine the aim/ideal outcome of crisis response;
- devise action strategy to reach the goal;
- take action and implement the strategy.

Leaders also need to establish effective communication by:

- mapping stakeholder groups that are specific audiences;
- identifying units of information that they wish to relay;

- creating messages from the units of information that are accessible to different audiences;
- selecting the media or medium to be used to relay information;
- responding to feedback from internal and external audiences; and
- continuously evaluating the effectiveness of communication, and adapting it, if necessary.

Leaders should not forget that:

- their first obligation is to think clearly and from the perspective of the community;
- they need to have the courage to name the problem and the possible consequences;
- they have to take leadership in the development and implementation of crisis response; and
- they need to engage stakeholders in order to maintain or restore trust, enhance confidence and multiple the resources available for crises response by the contribution of stakeholders.

## 5.9. ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Leaders should not forget that stakeholders include all internal and external audiences. Appropriate messages need to be created and disseminated to all these audiences. Most crisis experts suggest that internal audiences should be informed first so as they feel respected and belonging to an inner circle. If they feel involved and engaged, they can act consistently and supportive, and will mobilize all resources for the crisis response.

It is also important to inform external audiences as soon as possible, disseminating at least as much as what can safely be communicated. In most cases, at a minimum the following can be communicated already in the first hours:

- A statement of basic information and awareness of the weight of the event;
- Empathy towards victims, and all those who are negatively affected;
- A declaration of the values and principles that will guide the response;
- At least some indication of the kind of response measures, or of the approach to handling the crisis;
- Commitment to take responsibility for the community (not necessarily for the crisis) and to act consistently in the interest of the community.

These points, in whatever depth that the situation allows, are sufficient to secure the “first-mover advantage” (see below) and demonstrate that the organisation cares and deserves the trust of the community.

### 5.10. THE FIRST-MOVER ADVANTAGE

A crisis is an unexpected, confusing situation for all stakeholders when events are different from normal life and operation. In most cases, no actor has all relevant information, or see the possible outcome/s of processes during the first hours. It is a normal reaction of people to easily accept explanations and information that first arrive to them. The first information makes deep imprint: people build their own interpretation of causes, blame, prospects based on this first information. This is why it is important for local leaders to be the first to inform the community. If they do, they can control the interpretation of the crisis by explaining the nature of the crisis, the principles and aims that will guide crisis response and the foreseeable actions.

The first mover will probably make the biggest impact. It renders it for all other players more difficult to create alternative narratives of the event. It also makes it difficult for opponents to attack the leadership.

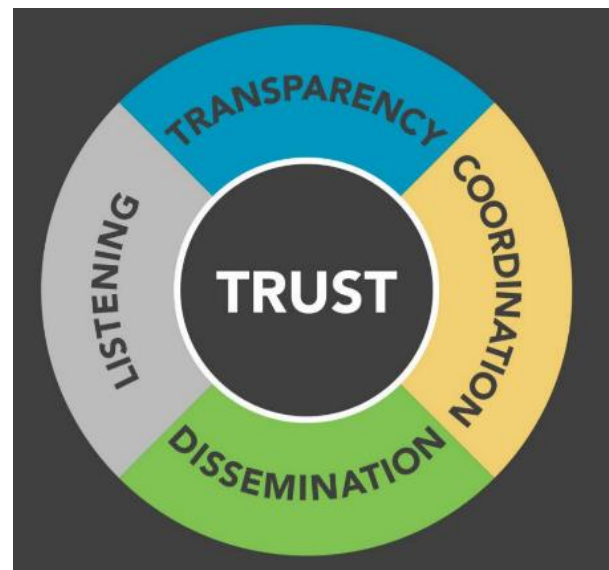
Being the first is a key relational issue. It also helps the leadership to establish itself as the main

source for future information. In order to maintain this advantage, communication need to be honest, clear, transparent and consistent and keep the community connected. For this, it is necessary to inform, at end of each message, when will further communication follow and when can further details or announcements about next steps be expected.

### 5.11. PRINCIPLES OF CRISIS COMMUNICATION<sup>3</sup>

The United States of America’s Centres for Disease Control and Prevention have produced excellent resources and practical materials for leaders and emergency professionals that are widely used around the world. We find them the most adequate for summing up the explanations about crisis communication.

The leadership challenge is to maintain trust by transparency and effective and coordinated action, and by effective communication that entails both information sharing and listening to stakeholders’ concerns and perceptions.








source: CERC

<sup>3</sup> based on materials from CERC (Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication: downloaded from: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/>)

In crisis communication it is essential to follow the 6 principles of CERC:

**6**  
**PRINCIPLES**  
**OF CERC**

<b>BE FIRST</b> 	<b>BE RIGHT</b> 
<b>BE CREDIBLE</b> 	<b>EXPRESS EMPATHY</b> 
<b>PROMOTE ACTION</b> 	<b>SHOW RESPECT</b> 

"The right message at the right time from the right person can save lives"

## 6. EXERCISE HANDOUTS

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### 6.1. HANDOUT 1: CLEARWATER SCENARIO AND ROLES FOR ACTIVITY 2

#### **Environmental crisis in Clearwater Scenario**

##### **Context**

Clearwater is a town, far from Europe, with 80.000 inhabitants. Another 20.000 people live in surrounding villages. A private chemical factory built some 20 years ago is one of the most important employers in the region. A side-product of the factory is a liquid that is a dangerous waste. Before neutralisation and disposal, this liquid is collected in large open-air pools, constructed 20 years ago. The protection of the pools does not comply with the new national regulation but, as it had been in use before the new regulation was adopted, the factory was allowed to continue using it.

The waterworks that supplies the area with drinking water was reconstructed 7 years ago with the support of a central government grant. At the time new wells were also drilled that were at the permitted minimal distance from the chemical plant, according to the regulation at the time. By the actual regulation, more distance would be necessary.

##### **Scenario**

An anonymous report has been sent to the Confidential Reporting System of the municipality. The author of the report claims that the waste-water pool of the chemical factory is leaking. He adds that the dangerous liquid can contaminate the soil and the drinking water base of the town and that he cannot reveal his identity because he does not want to lose his job.

## Environmental crisis in Clearwater – the Roles

### Mayor

*INSTRUCTIONS: If you received this card, please reveal your identity and start acting as the Mayor, who has just received the anonymous report. You can start thinking alone or consult advisers or professionals. Your team-mates have some role descriptions but they will reveal them only if you decide to look for the type of advisor or professional.*

You are a popular and charismatic local leader, mayor of the community for the past 7,5 years. Your predecessor has initiated the reconstruction of the water supply system and the water plant but you were the lucky one who inaugurated it, by means of which you gained the praise of the population for ensuring better water quality.

During the last years, you have reformed the municipal operation. You trust that you are in control of your organisation.

You are running for re-election in a couple of months and have started your campaign. Your supporters are the local entrepreneurs and the middle class and elite of citizens. There are some derelict areas of the town but you think that people from those areas rarely vote.

You have a communication advisor who has worked for you since your first campaign, has excellent media contacts and has your full trust.

### Communication advisor to the Mayor

*INSTRUCTIONS: At the beginning of the exercise, you act as an observer. You are silent. You can reveal your identity and the additional information you have only if the mayor explicitly asks for your role. If he does, you start acting in your role. BUT, please reveal only the information and opinion you are asked for.*

You are the trusted Political and Communication Adviser of the Mayor. You know him since school years and worked for him since his first campaign, 8 years ago. You feel that you had a big part in his victory for his first and second term. Now local elections will be held in 2 months. You are again the head of the campaign team. You do not live in this town but have excellent media contacts (both local and national).

Additional information for the Political or Communication Advisor:

- You are not a civil servant. You work as an adviser on a contract base;
- You know that a large part of the population like the strong and charismatic character of the mayor because his strengths give them a feeling of safety;
- The local media is divided and some outlets often spread biased reports;
- The Mayor's political opponent also has some good contacts and would be willing to use any, even dirty strategies;
- You have a team of event organisers paid from the campaign budget and not from the municipal budget;

You know that the municipality has an info leaflet that has wide circulation, a teletext page, and a local cable TV that many watch twice a day.

### Head of the Municipal Press or Communication Department

*INSTRUCTIONS: At the beginning of the exercise, you act as an observer. You are silent. You can reveal your identity and the additional information you have only if the mayor explicitly asks for your role. If he does, you start acting in your role. BUT, please reveal only the information and opinion you are asked for.*

Additional information for the head of the Municipal Press or Communication Department:

- The municipality has an info leaflet that has wide circulation, a teletext page, and a local cable TV that many watch twice a day.
- The agency that produces the weekly leaflet, teletext and cable TV programmes works under your supervision and you have good working relations;
- You also know that the Health Department has nurses who are in regular contact with families with children and chronically sick persons and that the Social Affairs Department has a network of community workers who are very active in deprived local areas;
- You know some local NGOs who are active in different domains.

### Head of the Municipal Infrastructure Department

*INSTRUCTIONS: At the beginning of the exercise, you act as an observer. You are silent. You can reveal your identity and the additional information that you have only if the Mayor explicitly asks for you. If he invites you to consult, you start acting in your role. BUT, please reveal only the information and opinion you are asked for.*

Additional information: you know that:

- According to the actual regulation, the wells of the water supply system should not be so close to the chemical plant. They are so close because they were built before the new law was adopted;
- There is a nationally accredited laboratory that makes water and waste-water tests for the local water and waste-water system but they do not work for the factory;
- The factory is responsible for testing its products and emissions;
- The factory has observation wells<sup>4</sup> around the open-air pools;
- The waste is very dangerous for human health. In small quantity and in short time it causes symptoms that can be misdiagnosed for diarrhoea but in the longer time it can cause degenerations especially for new-borns and children;
- Your expert estimate is that, if the waste-water is leaking in the soil, after a couple of days it can contaminate private wells in the garden city part of the town and in 2-3 weeks can arrive to the wells of the water works;
- In the garden city, inhabitants have piped water. They use the wells as an additional source. At the same time, in the poor neighbourhood of the city, that is adjacent to the garden city part, most people do not have running water in their houses. They mostly use their own wells because the public drinking water fountains are often couple of hundred meters away from their houses.

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<sup>4</sup> Observation wells are wells constructed to monitor ground water levels and quality along natural water banks or water treatment plants.

### **Head of the Municipal Health Department /Health Officer**

*INSTRUCTIONS: At the beginning of the exercise, you act as an observer. You are silent. You can reveal your identity and the additional information you have only if the Mayor explicitly asks for you and wants to invite you for a meeting. If he does, you start acting in your role. BUT, please reveal only the information and opinion you are asked for.*

Additional information:

- If the dangerous waste-water get mixed into the drinking water it can causes symptoms that can be misdiagnosed for diarrhoea, and in longer time it can cause degenerations especially for new-borns and children;
- You have nurses who work with pregnant women and with families with children, visiting the families during the first weeks after birth and keeping contact with mothers during the first 3 years of the life of children. They also work in kindergartens and schools;
- You also have a few nurses who support old and chronically sick people who live in their own homes;
- Most of your nurses have good relations to the community but they are very busy and their regular work fills up their working time;
- You can imagine that the social workers employed by the Municipality or NGOs may have more time and flexibility.

### **Head of the Municipal Department for Social Services and Community relations**

*INSTRUCTIONS: At the beginning of the exercise, you act as an observer. You are silent. You can reveal your identity and the additional information you have only if the Mayor explicitly asks for you. If he does, you start acting in your role. BUT, please reveal only the information and opinion you are asked for.*

- You have social workers who work with families and persons who need assistance;
- Some also support old people living alone;
- Your social workers have good relations especially in the deprived areas of the town but they are very busy, and their regular work fills up their working time;
- You think that NGOs can always be mobilized to help in emergency situations.

### **Director of the chemical factory**

*INSTRUCTIONS: At the beginning of the exercise, you act as an observer. You are silent. You can reveal your identity if the mayor explicitly calls you or invites you for consultation. If he does, you start acting in your role.*

- You do not trust the Mayor. You know him as a strong and egoistic person, and a competitive negotiator, who does not often consider the interests of his opponents;
- You are aware that the pool leaks but do not want to disclose it because you should pay a lot for the environmental damage and repair, it would damage the reputation of your company and risk the forced closing of the old technology;
- You still hope that the leakage can be repaired;
- You already hired experts to advise solutions;
- The experts told that if they can act fast, the contamination will not spread too far and further contamination can be contained;
- You try to find solutions keeping the facts for you as much as possible;
- Your company has a Board but you have not informed your Board yet. You want to keep all information as long as you cannot propose a solution.



## 6.2. HANDOUT 2: PLANNING RESPONSE STRATEGY FOR ACTIVITY 3

### Clearwater exercise Part 2 - Planning Response Strategy

A couple of hours have passed since the Mayor received the report. You are a member of the Mayor's Crisis Team in the identity that you received during the first part of the exercise.

This time everybody is involved in the discussion, except the Director of the factory.

The Mayor or the team members can give a call to the Director any time. The Director can decide whether to answer to the calls. The Mayor can also invite the director to take part in the meeting.

The task of the group is to develop a response strategy by discussing the following four questions in this order:

- What do we have? What is the problem?
- What does it mean?
  - How could this situation evolve?
  - What are the likely consequences?
  - What are the predictable reactions of different stakeholders?
  - What are the likely consequences of reactions of stakeholders?
- What could be the response strategy?
  - What is our aim?
  - What is the best possible outcome?
  - How could we make that happen?

### 6.3. HANDOUT 3: CRISIS COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR ACTIVITY 4

#### Clearwater exercise Part 3 – Communication Plan

In this exercise, you work in a new group. You are a member of the communication team of the Mayor. Your task is to develop the part of the communication plan for a specific stakeholder group that has been assigned to your group.

As a first step, make a stakeholder analysis along the following question:

- What are the main risks of the situation?
- Are there any group specific risks to the stakeholder group assigned to you?
- What is the typical/expected knowledge and perception of group members regarding relevant themes and issues?
- What are the fears of the group members?
- What information would this group need?
- What are trusted communication channels, sources, persons for the group members?

After the stakeholder analysis, plan your message and its delivery, filling up one or more lines in the table. You need to use more lines if you think that your stakeholder group should be further segmented.

AUDIENCE	KEY MESSAGES	SUPPORTING FACTS	COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

If you have doubts, the best way to check your message is by asking the following questions.

If I were a member of this specific group/audience:

- What would I want to know?
- What would I need to know?
- How would I want the messages communicated to me?
- What channels would I seek and listen to?

## 6.4. HANDOUT 4: TRAINER'S GUIDE FOR THE CLEARWATER EXERCISE FOR ACTIVITY 2-4

### Trainer's Guide for the Clearwater exercise

The aim of the Clearwater exercise is to serve as a starting point for the discussions on different aspects of crisis management. The exercise has three main parts: an introductory role-play, a problem analysis and policy making simulation, and a crisis communication planning part.

#### **Instructions for the trainer regarding the Role-play exercise:**

Participants form groups of 7. They receive a scenario of a local environmental crisis and roles they will play in the first and second part of the exercise.

Only the Mayor has to reveal his role right away and start thinking what to do. Other group members do not share their identities at the start.

The Mayor can reflect alone what would he do or can invite other experts or staff members to help his reflection.

All others act as observers as long as the Mayor does not invite their role. When invited by the Mayor to consult, the participants can reveal their identity and the specific information that they know in that role.

It is important to follow the sequence in order to demonstrate the power of collecting fragmented information and reflecting on the problem and response actions before determining communication.

After the presentation of the response strategies of the groups in a plenary discussion, one response is selected for further work. The trainer closes the discussion by a summary of the Principles of Crisis Response (Chapter 5.3.) referring as much as possible to the previous discussion.

#### **Instructions for the trainer regarding Response Planning exercise:**

Participants go back to their groups keeping their previous roles but this time everybody is involved in the discussion. The group works as a task force that develops a response strategy following the instructions in Handout 2: Planning Response Strategy (Chapter 6.2). Strategies are discussed in a plenary session. After the discussion the trainer summarises the key considerations for leaders in time of crisis, referring as much as possible to the previous discussion.

#### **Instructions for the trainer regarding communication plan:**

Participants are not in their previous roles anymore. They are divided in new groups so as they can better step out of their roles. They work as members of the task force that develops a draft for a communication plan for the first days.

Participants develop drafts for communication plans for different stakeholder groups with the help of the worksheet distributed. In the plenary discussion, participants identify similarities and differences in the needs of groups and the plans. The trainer focuses on the need for targeting messages and identifying adequate channels for communication.

## 6.5. HANDOUT 5: CRISIS RESPONSE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ACTIVITY 5

Please, reflect on possible activities local leadership should/could initiate in the municipality in time of crisis.

In this exercise, we aim to reflect on the effective distribution of roles and responsibilities between local and national leaders during national and global emergencies.

When ticking the boxes of the 'National or Global Crisis', please, work on the assumption that international organisations and the National government effectively play their roles in crisis response!

	<b>Possible activities initiated by the local leadership</b>	<b>Roles of local leadership in local crisis, like Clearwater</b>	<b>Roles of local leadership in National or Global Crisis</b>
1	Set up a crisis committee that can follow events, prepare and/or make decisions		
2	Set up groups of experts to support decision-making		
3	Contact organisations that have a role in crisis response or communication		
4	Collect information, analyse the situation, its evolution, consequences and prospects		
5	Define the problem and crisis response strategy		
6	Review and modify a decision and administrative procedure at the extent necessary for effective crisis response		
7	Direct resources for addressing the problem (causes of the crisis)		
8	Plan and implement crisis response activities		
9	Develop narratives about the crisis situation, its evolution, prospects and strategies to mitigate it		
10	Make stakeholder analysis and communication strategy towards different audiences		
11	Establish communication channels that reach stakeholders and convey adequate information		
12	Organize support and supporting networks that can reach even the vulnerable		

## 6.6. HANDOUT 6: ED KLOTZBIER'S ADVICE ON PREPARING FOR CRISIS<sup>5</sup> FOR ACTIVITY 7

*Ed Klotzbier served on Massachusetts Governor Michael Dukakis's staff when the governor was the Democratic nominee for President of the United States in 1988. In 1986, Mr. Klotzbier worked for Governor Dukakis during the governor's successful campaign for re-election. Mr. Klotzbier holds a law degree and is currently the Vice President for Student Affairs at Northeastern University. Prior to this appointment, he was the Director for University Communications at Northeastern. One of his responsibilities involves participating on a committee that prepares for and responds to any organisational crises.*

There are several factors that make crisis communicators effective. First, you have to prepare. There is an expression: You fix your roof on a sunny day. Similarly, the time to deal with a crisis is not when you are in one, but before you are immersed. We can and have created template strategies for crises. We might develop a template strategy for a natural disaster. When we are hit with something that is similar, we use the template. Let us say we develop a template strategy for a blizzard. We use the template for a hurricane or flood or something else that is similar. Another key to success is that you have to know your stakeholders and must be able to access them quickly. We have lists of our various constituencies ready so that in an emergency we can send a message out to them instantly. Also, you have to make sure you get the message right. By this I mean you want to make sure that you are clear about the four or five things you want to say, and stay on message. Your crisis team has to be on the same page. We in our crisis team work very closely together during crises, and therefore prior to crisis, we want to spend time together formally and informally in order to develop relationships and chemistry that is invaluable during crises. There is no room for deception in crisis communication. Your credibility is so important that it would be foolish for that reason alone to be anything other than transparent. There may be times when we strategically omit something but that is because we want to be diplomatic with certain stakeholders; it is not for deception. To retain information to deceive by omission is not wise or right. A problem some organisations have during crises is that they forget their internal audiences. You must remember your internal audiences. I get my messages to the internal audiences before the external. I want them to at least know I made an attempt to reach them before they read something in a newspaper. What makes crisis communication approaches different in the 21st century than in prior ones is the rapid advance of technology and the 24/7 media coverage. We have to know how our constituencies get information and be aware of the realities related to how they get information.

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<sup>5</sup> Alana Jay Zambera: Crisis communication: Theory and Practice. London-New York: Routledge. 2010. p.26.

## RELEVANT MATERIAL, BOOKS AND PAPERS FOR FURTHER READING

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The Council of Europe tool on emergency response and good governance – a tool for capacity-building for local authorities on resilience and preparedness of municipalities in risk governance.

Garcia, Helio Fred: The Agony of Decision: Mental Readiness and Leadership in a Crisis. Logos Institute. Best Practices Series Book 1. 2017

Alana Jay Zambera: Crisis communication: Theory and Practice. London-New York: Routledge. 2010. Chapter 1

Lucinda Austin-Yan Jin eds. Social Media and Crisis Communication. London-New York: Routledge. 2018.

CDC: Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication: By Leaders for Leaders. downloaded on 02.04.2020 from <file:///C:/Work/kis%20munk%C3%A1k/CoE/crisis%20management/coursea/leaders%20for%20leaders.pdf>

Resources and materials at CERC (Crisis&Emergency Risk Communication) website: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/>