

31st Annual Labor & Employment Law Conference

When Bad Things Happen to Good Employers: Crisis Management Strategies

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1

What is a crisis?

- Any disruptive and unexpected event that threatens to harm an organization, its stakeholders, or the general public
- From a PR standpoint: An event that attracts negative media coverage, a negative social media post, and hinders normal business activity

2

Examples of crises

- Executive is publicly accused of sexual misconduct
- A workplace shooting
- Recall of a defective product
- Your food sends customers to the hospital
- A strike or lockout
- Government investigation
- Data breach affecting customers and/or employees

3

Who's ready for a crisis?

- According to the Institute for Crisis Management, only half of organizations worldwide have developed a crisis plan.
- Possible impediments:
 - Expense (It costs money)
 - Time (It takes effort)
 - Denial (It won't happen to us)
 - Fear of the unknown
 - Busy with other things

4

Be prepared — with a plan

- Think of it as an insurance policy: You may never need it, but if a crisis strikes, you'll be happy to have it
- It will boost your reputation among stakeholders as being responsible and ready to respond
 - You can say: "we had a plan, employees were trained on what to do, and they followed our plan."
- A plan will help navigate a crisis before it damages your organization's good name or bottom line

5

We Have Seen Specific Plan Examples:

- Active Shooter Response Policy
 - DHS resource at: <https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/active-shooter-how-to-respond-2017-508.pdf>
- California/OSHA Sample Workplace Violence Prevention Plan
 - <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dosh/Workplace-Violence.html>
 - On July 1, California employers are required to have a plan
 - Must provide training when implemented, and annually
 - Requires and incident log

6

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