

AGENDA

- ❑ Establishing Crisis Communications for Media Relations
- ❑ The Boston Marathon Bombing: Communicating Through the Crisis
- ❑ Q&A
- ❑ Session Wrap Up



PSPR2 Seminar Series: Mass Casualty Impact and Recovery

THE SESSION WILL BEGIN SHORTLY



PSPR2

SEMINARS FOR RESILIENCE



American
Red Cross



Homeland Security
and Emergency Services



PSPR2 Seminar Series: Mass Casualty Impact and Recovery

SETTING UP CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS FOR MEDIA RESPONSE



PSPR2

SEMINARS FOR RESILIENCE



American Red Cross



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PSPR2 SERIES OVERVIEW



The primary goals of the Private Sector Preparedness, Response, and Recovery Seminar (PSPR2) series are to:

- Provide participants with critical infrastructure best practices at the owner and operator level on recovery and continuity resulting from a mass casualty event
- Present and discuss best practices on phases of mass casualty event recovery, and
- Provide partners with planning resources and tools to assist with mass casualty impact and recovery.



SEMINARS FOR RESILIENCE



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Learn about the importance of crisis communications planning
- List the key components of a crisis communication plan
- Outline the basics of an effective press conference
- Explain the importance of pre-designated communication templates
- Describe the media engagement following the Boston Marathon Bombing



HOUSEKEEPING

- Cameras and microphones are disabled
- Safari and Chrome users might experience connectivity issues; recommended to use Teams desktop or mobile application (*preferred*), Edge, or Firefox
- Please use the Q&A chat in the upper right corner
- Captions may not be enabled by your organization
- Session is being recorded and will be available via [Vimeo](https://www.p4-hub.org/pages/pspr2) soon on the PSPR2 Site: <https://www.p4-hub.org/pages/pspr2>



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Establishing Crisis Communications for Media Relations

John Matthews
Community Safety Institute

Proactive
not
Reactive

Starts long before and incident occurs

Involves all levels of the organization

Addresses the entire emergency management cycle (Prevention/Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery)

Proactive

Why is it so difficult?

- Most organizations want to be proactive, but because they are numbers driven and its difficult if not impossible to measure what is prevented or doesn't happen.
- Our risk managers and emergency management people try to be proactive but often their efforts simply are not fully utilized on the organization's operational levels.
- Even if the entity is prepared on paper when an incident occurs the flaws in the system, lack of planning, preparation and practice are quickly exposed.

Prevention/Mitigation driven actions

- Develop a crisis communications plan before it is needed. Who speaks, when do they speak, what do they speak about?
- Have a master crisis communications plan and a version for every eventuality. Coordinate with your risk manager to determine potential vulnerabilities and their probability of occurrence.
- Know the elements of effective communication skills
- Communicate to employees the need for prevention driven actions such as identifying and reporting potential threats before they happen i.e... Disgruntled employees, employees who make threats, employee who own weapons and discuss potential crimes

REMEMBER most mass shootings occur in workplaces (29.4) followed by schools (25.1)

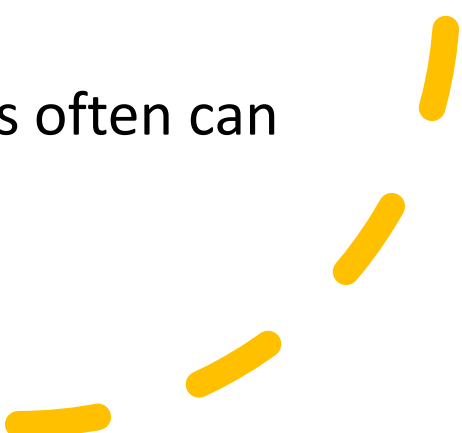
Planning

- Does not stop with the document in the corporate office
- Plans must be communicated to Managers and Supervisors
- Plans must be practiced
- Realistic training is essential






Effective risk communication

- Communication is critical to the successful resolution of any type of health, safety, or environmental controversy.
 - High-concern situations create substantial barriers to effective communication:
 - Evoke strong emotions, such as fear, anxiety, distrust, anger, outrage, helplessness, and frustration
 - Emotionally charged situations change rules for effective communication
 - Familiar and traditional approaches often can make the situation worse
- 

Proactive – Preparedness Driven Actions



Pre-written crisis
communications
templates

Pre-designed social
media

Practice
Role-Playing
Testing

Training
Threat Assessment
Response Procedures

Anonymous Threat
Reporting Systems

Communication Templates and Messages

- Must be prepared in advance
- Must address a wide variety of situations
- Must be distributed and utilized throughout the organization as media must be fed immediately
- Must address specific situations and general corporate values and priorities ie. employee and family safety



Pre-Designed communication templates are crucial

- Keeps messaging on point and consistent throughout all levels of the organization
- Ensures messaging is clear because when people are stressed or upset, they often have difficulty hearing, understanding, and remembering information
- Ready-to-use in case of an emergency because most of the concerns and questions of upset people can be predicted in advance.
- Demonstrates empathy, caring and concern of the organization because when people are stressed and upset, they typically want to know that you care before they care what you know.

Anticipating the media cycles and public demand for information

Day One

- Release statement quickly
– Confirm initial details
- Hold initial news conference (5-8 hours) and give schedule for regular updates
- Communicate caring and exhibit confidence
- Challenge: Rumor control

Day Two and Three

- Make subject matter experts available for interviews
- Communicate continued concern and exhibit leadership
- Challenge: Expect your past actions/behavior to be used to explain predicted future actions (success/failures)

Day Four and beyond

- Demonstrate a long-term plan for recovery
- Challenge: Victims and their families may feel bitter and cause decisiveness



Communication Guidelines

- Accept and involve the public as a legitimate partner
- Plan carefully and evaluate your efforts
- Listen to the public's specific concerns
- Be honest, frank, and open
- Coordinate and collaborate with other credible sources
- Meet the needs of the media
- Speak clearly and with compassion

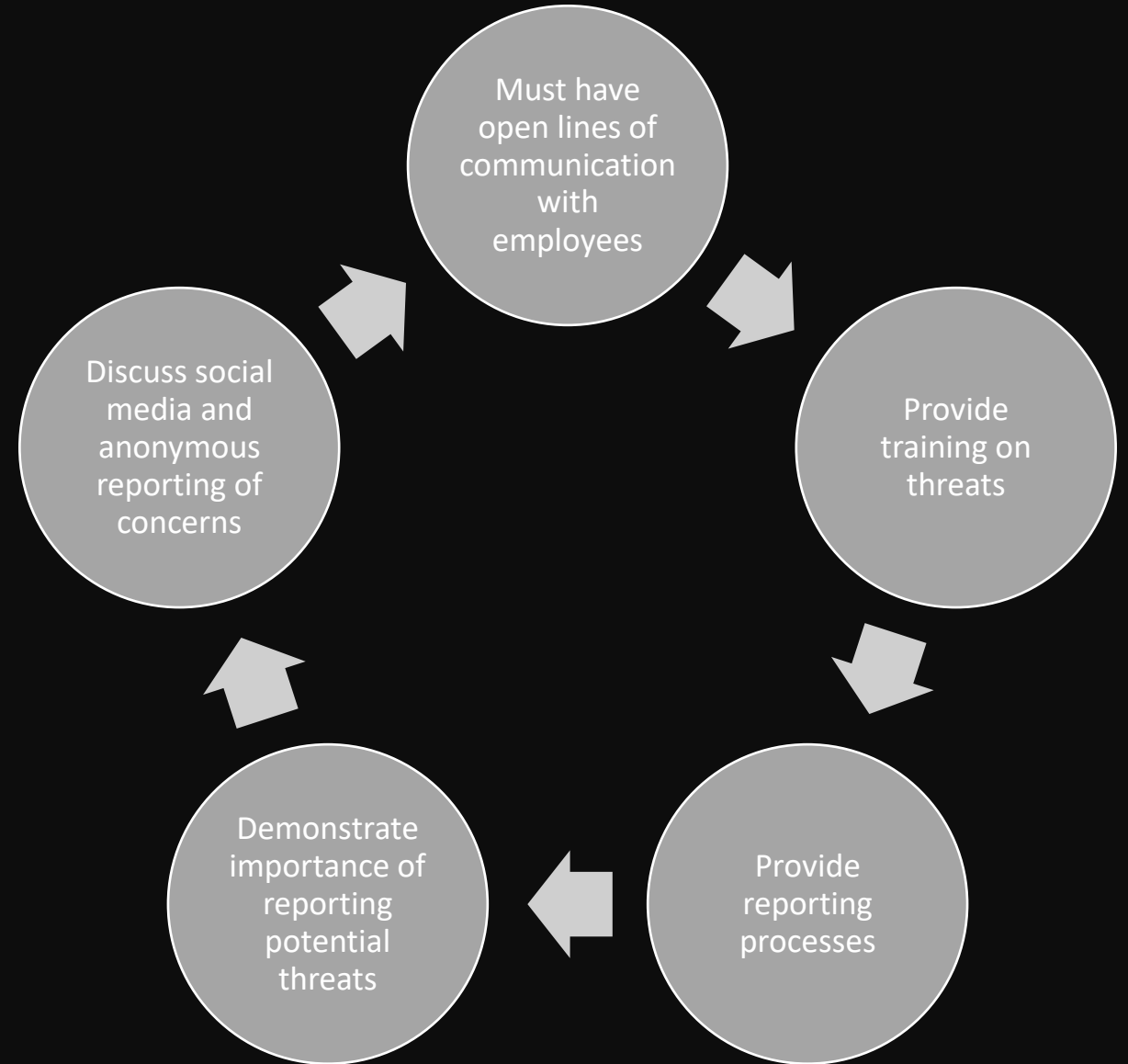
Crisis Management Communications

- Build a consistent track record of showing empathy.
- Plan for prompt and decisive action.
- Prepare to communicate swiftly, consistently, and constantly.

Keys to presenting information
with empathy

- Demonstrate organization's stake.
- Answer all questions.
- Support answers with information.
- Repeat main message.
- Reference the future.

Prevention/Mitigation



Reactive - Response driven actions

- Plan

Reactive – Response Driven Actions



Press conferences

Responding to
social media

Responding to
rumors and
misinformation

Briefings for
employees and
families

Written statements
and advertising
targeting customers

Press Conference Basics

01

Seek out the media – first
Be prepared to announce
when and where press
conferences and updates
will be held

02

Respond quickly,
concisely, clearly

- Fully and truthfully
- Listen to them (what are they asking/why)
- Avoid antagonizing the media

03

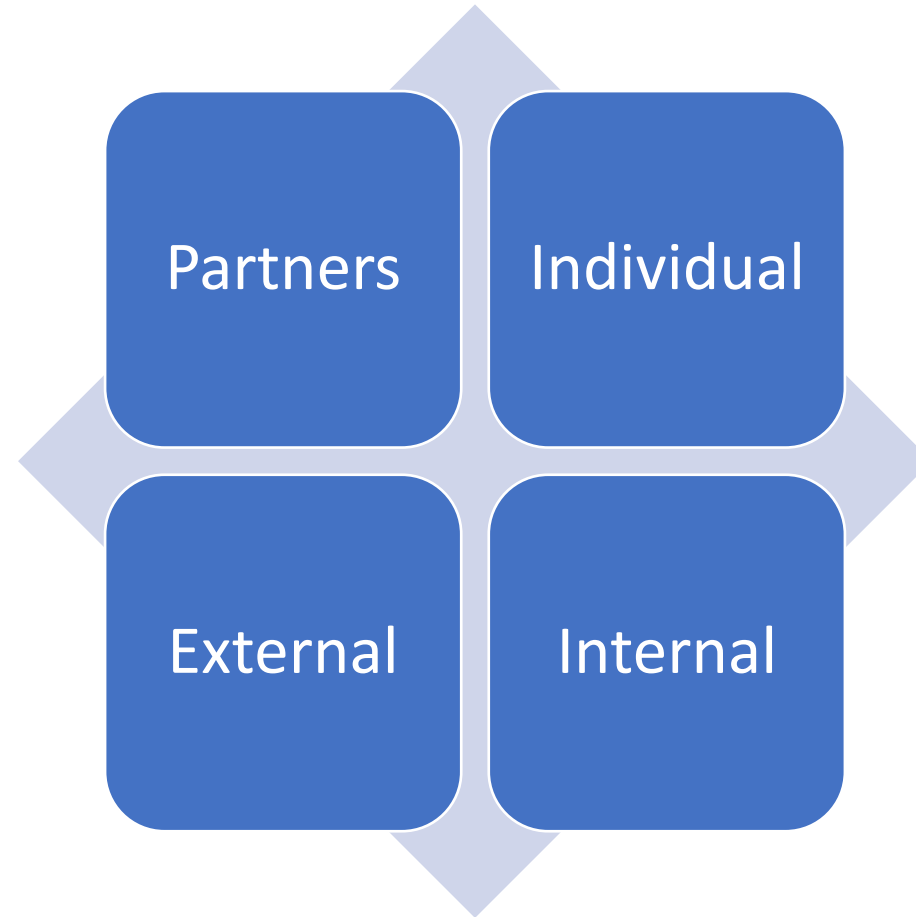
Focus on delivering your
key messages

- Provide specific examples, data or anecdotes to support your messages

Press Conference Basics

- Pause before answering a question – think.
- Avoid negative language
 - “I’m not a crook” vs “I’m an honest man.”
- Leave on high note– summarize key points in positive manner
- Think how your information to the media will affect other agencies (local and international.) Call to warn them.

Types of Press Conferences/Briefings



Joint Press Conferences - Partners

Law
Enforcement

Fire/EMS

Emergency
Management

Elected
Officials

Spokespersons
and Subject
Matter Experts

Individual Press Conference

Presented by corporation

Facilitated by Corporate Executive
and PIO

Demonstrate compassion and
caring

Show leadership on incident
response and recovery



External Communications

- Messaging for the public
 - Instills confidence in organization
 - Highlights leadership
 - Demonstrates care and concern
 - Shows path to recovery
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Internal Communications

Messaging for employees and families

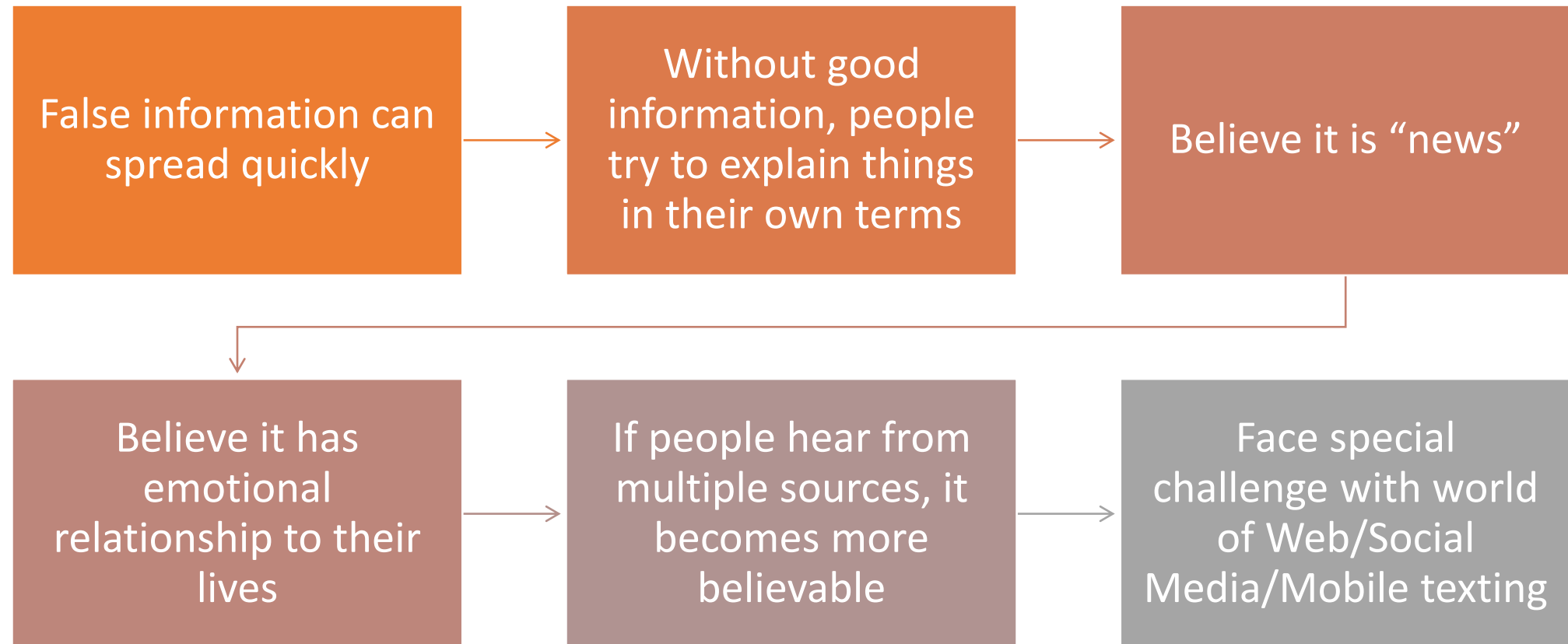
Shows compassion

Demonstrates preparation, planning

Highlights road to recovery

Projects future results

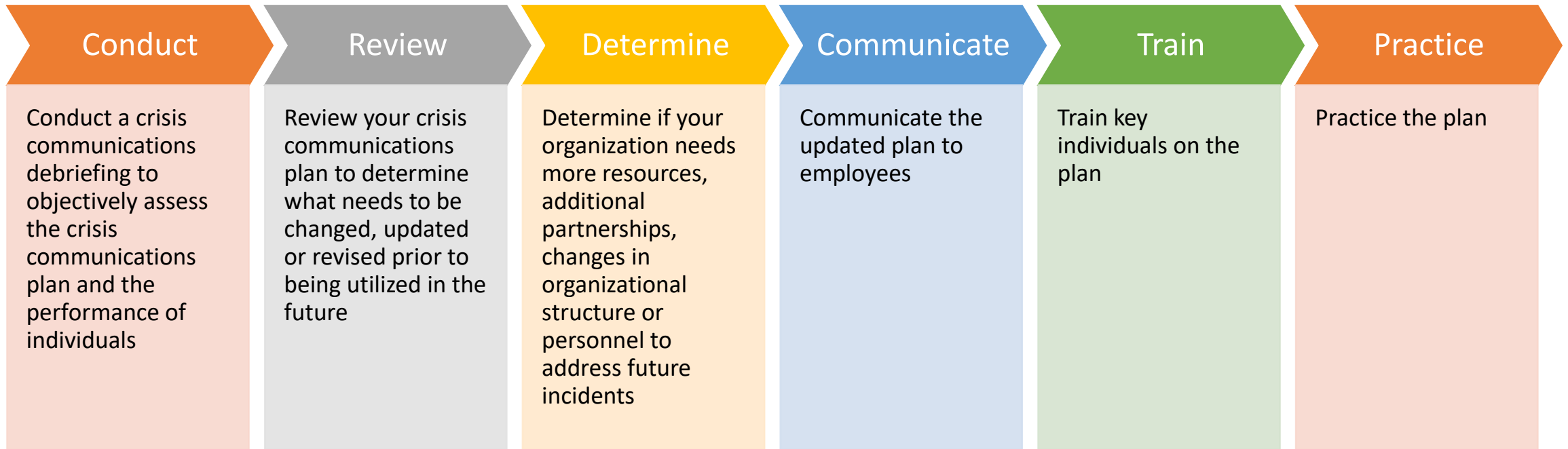
Rumors and Rumor Control



Combating Rumors

- Establish “preventative measures” especially for social media content
- Understand crisis, uncertainty and lack of verified information intensify rumors
- Counter rumors
 - Confirm if true
 - Avoid no comment
 - Refute false rumor via appropriate level/source
 - Refute rumor based upon the truth

Recovery driven actions



Recovery actions lead right back to prevention and preparedness actions

Summary

Crisis communications

- should be proactive and preventative
- the Plan, Training and Practice should be in place prior to an incident occurring
- effects every aspect of the emergency management cycle
- must be a priority of the organization

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Contact Information

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The Boston Marathon Bombing: Communicating Through the Crisis

LISA HUGHES, ANCHOR WITH WBZ-TV NEWS – BOSTON



Q&A



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PSPR2: When the Crime Tape Comes Down

June 15th, 0900 Pacific/1200 Eastern

Registration Page: <https://bit.ly/PSPR2-S4>

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the short survey on your phone





**WE ARE EXPERIENCING
TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES –**

*PLEASE STAND BY A FEW
MOMENTS WHILE WE
RECONNECT*

