



Responsible communication during the COVID-19 crisis

As a business owner with responsibility for a workforce, you can have a positive impact through communication: stop harmful rumours in their tracks and persuade people to take protective measures. Crises are time-sensitive events that require quick actions and timely, honest communication to reduce harm. Please follow these tips for communicating responsibly and effectively.

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| Step | CREATE A DEDICATED CRISIS COMMUNICATION TEAM |
| 1 | Set up a small team consisting of a top management representative, HR manager, OHS officer, communication expert, worker representative, etc. They should meet regularly to monitor the situation closely. |
| Step | COMMUNICATE TO YOUR EMPLOYEES |
| 2 | First, inform internally, to your workforce. It is important to be transparent without inciting panic. This may include information about factory closure, different working hours or shifts, protective measures during production, changes in the pay-out of salaries, etc. If necessary, also provide an assessment of your company's financial situation and outlook. |
| Step | COMMUNICATE EXTERNALLY |
| 3 | Regularly communicate with your customers, partners and suppliers. They will provide you with valuable information about possible delays or other supply chain issues. Be transparent in communicating your own challenges and what you are doing to reduce risks. |

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION DURING A CRISIS

BUILD TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY Be honest, acknowledge uncertainty, don't over-reassure and don't conceal negative information. Honest communication can reduce rumors, needless anxiety and fear.

ACT FAST Disseminate information in a timely manner. Do not wait.

ONLY COMMUNICATE RELIABLE INFORMATION Seek input and information material from public authorities and reliable sources such as the WHO.

TARGET-SPECIFIC LANGUAGE Communicate with your employees in easy-to-understand language about current status, challenges, measures and perspectives.

MULTIPLE PLATFORMS Disseminate information through multiple platforms that reach your employees (e.g. mobile phone texts, social media, print media such as posters, brochures).

ENCOURAGE DIALOGUE Provide space for employees to ask questions/raise concerns and respond to them.

MANAGE EMOTIONS Be aware you are dealing with people in an exceptional situation. They are worried and insecure. Show understanding and solidarity.

PERSUADE EMPLOYEES TO TAKE RISK-REDUCING ACTIONS such as social distancing and frequent hand-washing, also in their families, communities.