

In a landscape where some degree of crisis is an inevitability, the construction industry stands at the forefront: The stakes are high and the margin for error is slim. From equipment collapses to onsite accidents, the potential for crises looms large. Heather Ripley, CEO of Ripley PR and expert in crisis management, sheds light on the significance of preparing a plan for business leaders. Drawing from extensive experience navigating the complexities of crisis communications, Ripley provides insights into the paramount risks and challenges confronting construction business owners, along with the short- and long-term strategies essential for their mitigation.

Could you broadly explain the importance of having a crisis management plan specifically tailored for the construction industry? What are the key risks and challenges that construction business owners should consider when developing such a plan?

Most business owners, no matter what their industry is, know that they will face a crisis at some point. It's not a matter of if, but when. This is especially true of the construction industry, which can face crises where people are physically harmed due to equipment collapses or falls.

That is why it is imperative that construction companies create a crisis management plan that includes activating their public relations (PR) partner's help in mitigating bad news. Your crisis communications strategy should build the framework that allows your construction company to continue operations during a disaster. An effective crisis communications

plan governs how you address employees, the media, and



Construction employees should regularly be required to attend safety training seminars to ensure that everyone knows how to stay safe and what to do when there is an emergency. This should be part of a construction crew's duties regardless of any further public relations protocols.

But, once the immediate danger is over, the company's crisis communications team should also be trained in how to deal with the media and the public for the days or weeks that attention will be paid to your team's actions.

We recommend that company spokespeople receive media training so that they know how to prepare for reporter interviews. Media training helps your spokespeople learn to stay on message, how to convey the right message, and how to make your company look good in the face of a crisis.

Given the dynamic nature of construction projects and the potential for unforeseen circumstances, how often should crisis management plans be reviewed and updated? What factors should construction business owners consider when evaluating the effectiveness of their plan?

In general, most companies should review their crisis communications plan once a year. In the construction business, you may need to update your plans more frequently if regulations change or there are significant changes.



About the Author

Megan Beam is editor of Construction Business Owner Magazine & Digital Media.

Interviewed was Heather Ripley, who is founder and CEO of Ripley PR, an elite global public relations agency specializing in franchising, the skilled trades, and B2B tech. Ripley PR is recognized as the top PR agency for the home service industry.

About the Article

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