



Critical Incident Response Services (CIRS)

Confident in Crisis. Resilient in Recovery.

Crisis Leadership

Prepare. Respond. Recover.

Introduction

Every organization benefits from strong leadership at every level, from executives and directors to managers, supervisors, and employees. Countless books have been written and studies conducted on leadership in organizations. This article, and future Crisis Leadership Briefs, are not about traditional leadership.

Over the coming weeks, I will publish a series of Crisis Leadership articles focused on the unique skills, strategies, and decision-making capabilities required during disruptive events. As organizations face increasing operational, reputational, and workforce challenges, crisis leadership has become essential.

When critical incidents occur without trained, prepared, and experienced crisis leaders, confusion ensues, employees struggle, operations are disrupted, and organizational reputations suffer lasting damage. Effective crisis leadership helps organizations maintain stability, support their workforce, protect critical operations, and recover with resilience.

Leadership principles and skills change dramatically during disruptive events. The chart below provides a brief comparison between traditional leadership and crisis leadership principles.

Traditional Leadership	Crisis Leadership
Build Vision	Establish Direction Amid Uncertainty
Develop People	Protect People
Seek Input	Make Timely Decisions with Incomplete Information
Build Consensus	Provide Clear Direction
Drive Performance	Ensure Safety, Stabilization, and Continuity
Delegate Responsibility	Direct Critical Actions
Manage Change	Lead Through Disruption
Optimize Operations	Preserve Operations
Coach and Develop	Reassure and Communicate

The television series *The Office* provides a humorous example of how **not** to lead during a crisis.

Watch: [Fire Drill – The Office US](#)

Thank you for reading. Please share this article with your colleagues and visit next week for another Crisis Leadership Brief designed to help leaders prepare confidently, respond effectively, and recover with resilience.

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A practical guide for leading through disruption.



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