

Mike needed help from an executive sponsor, the internal auditor, his own boss, or other person with knowledge and authority to help get him the resources needed. If nothing else, an internal multidisciplinary CPC could be a cost effective way to start the momentum toward preparedness. We worked through the internal auditor and enlisted an executive sponsor to support the crisis planning effort.

Because it was a large, multinational company, with more than 200,000 employees, the firm brought in a senior level group of managers from across the country and around the globe to serve on the CPC.

The scope of the project was daunting, and now that it had sufficient attention, management wanted it done “yesterday.” The company had international ground and air operations, distribution centers, facilities where the public was admitted, numerous office buildings, and multiple locations – each with its own inherent risks.

With little standardization in tracking or reporting of issues that occurred and no compilation of occurrences, the various regions were not aware of the critical incidents that occurred in their own areas, much less in the others.

Still, the company was committed to being crisis prepared. We were called in to work with Mike to set up and work with their newly formed CPC. Once the CPC was established and supported, a system to guide the company to a swift and successful completion was in focus. With diligence and collective effort – after five years of inaction – the company had an action plan and an initial response system in place six weeks later. A quality management system was established and, to this day, the company conducts worldwide crisis exercises at all levels of the organization on a regular basis. Lessons-learned at every level of the organization are conveyed to the CPC, and the planning process is a part of the continuous quality improvement system.

## **8.6 How to Set Up a CPC**

Just as important as deciding to have a committee is how you set it up. A number of considerations must be met to ensure the group's ultimate success:

1. Determine the scope.
2. Identify champions.
3. Select the members.
4. Set an agenda.
5. Establish a budget.

6. Make a schedule.
7. Conduct the meetings.

Now, let's examine each step in greater depth.

### 8.6.1 Determine the Scope

Before you choose your CPC, you should step back and take a large-scale view of your company. Ask yourself these questions to come up with the scope of the project you are undertaking:

- ▶ What are your objectives and expected deliverables?
- ▶ Is this a local, regional, national, or international project?
- ▶ Will the crisis management function be centralized at corporate or distributed throughout the organization?
- ▶ Will your plan be rolled out company-wide or piloted in selected areas?
- ▶ Do you have an existing plan that needs improving, or are you starting from scratch?
- ▶ What areas of foreseeable risks and concerns do you want to address?
- ▶ How high a priority is this project? How much support does it have from senior management?
- ▶ How much authority will the CPC have to do its job?

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### 8.6.2 Identify Champions

Champions are leaders, a committee's driving force. Typically, two champions are needed in company crisis planning: a senior-level champion and a logistical champion.

**Senior-level champion:** The senior-level champion is the visionary. He or she ensures that the right financial and human tools are in place to make the CPC a success, and provides top management support. He or she will delegate to the logistical champion.

**Logistical champion:** The logistical champion will actually lead the CPC through its process. Without the right person in this role, it will be difficult for the CPC to succeed. A good logistical champion is someone who:

- ▶ Has the passion and authority to make sure that the CPC's objectives and goals are met.
- ▶ Understands the scope of the project and agrees with the mission.
- ▶ Has a deep commitment to the process.
- ▶ Is able to invest the time to bring it to fruition or guide external consultants to a successful preparedness outcome.
- ▶ Has deep and wide company contacts, and will be respected by people at all levels in the organization.
- ▶ Possesses sufficient authority to make things happen.

### 8.6.3 Select the CPC Members

Getting the right mix of people is critical. Along with a blend of disciplines, you want a blend of personalities as well. It's important to include both task-oriented and people-oriented members. A balance of creative and analytical types is also good.

Depending on your corporate culture, you may either appoint members or invite people to participate. No matter which approach you choose, it would be wise to bring in an attorney (whether on staff or outside counsel) to formalize a defensible process. Besides having a mix of personality types on the CPC, you will want to have a mix of disciplines represented either on the core team or as auxiliary, ad hoc members. Here are some staff positions to consider having on the CPC:

- ▶ Attorney.
- ▶ Continuity or contingency planner.
- ▶ IT manager.
- ▶ HR manager.
- ▶ Government relations manager.
- ▶ Compliance manager.
- ▶ Risk and insurance manager.
- ▶ Financial manager.
- ▶ Medical director.