

# Supportive Connections

Volume 2, Issue 3 | 3rd Quarter

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## The three “M’s” of a good crisis plan. Do you know what they are?

Crisis management plans have evolved over the years to include very sophisticated systems of response. Federal regulations guide many industries’ strategic plans for managing incidents that happen in the workplace. However many companies still lack the most basic plans or struggle to bring offices or operations outside of the corporate hub onboard with crisis even the most basic crisis management plans. The result is a costly “reactive” process which follows the incident in the workplace. Why won’t the reluctant just “get with it”? Well let’s consider a few things that might stand in the way.

### 1) Is the need for the plan *meaningful*?

For those of us who work in risk management, loss prevention, human resources, employee assistance or security the answer is quite obviously—yes. However for the owner, franchisee or manager it is less clear whether this is a meaningful exercise. When other urgent matters take precedence, why take time to plan for something that will probably never happen? Certain types of crisis planning may seem more meaningful than others. I recently polled local business about plans they had in place. Many spoke about IT risks and backup systems and concerns about viruses and identify theft, but none had planned for robberies, accidents in the workplace, death of the owner or other crises that could inevitably “break” the business. The discussion about planning only became meaningful when the topic could be approached in a way that each owner to apply it directly to the business at hand and consider the impact on the business’s ability to retain the workforce, protect the reputation and stabilize the financial health of the company. If your company has a plan, but there’s not much interest in it, perhaps it’s time to explore what would make it more meaningful.

### 2) Is your plan *memorable*?

A memorable plan is one that despite the complexities has sense order, rhythm, design. It’s not a routinized process, but it **is** repeatable, flexible and it is driven by the need to care for the business and the employees. Communication (internal & external), safety and practical assistance for those in need are three key components for any crisis management plan. Any company large or small can start with these basic components and operationalize them to fit the needs of the company. A memorable plan is about simplicity. The plan should be the safe port in a storm.

### 3) Is the plan *manageable*?

The plan is most vulnerable during implementation. Makes sense . . . A plan that looks great on paper isn’t always the easiest to use. In a crisis, there is a lot of adrenaline flowing and it doesn’t necessarily mean that there is clear thinking. A plan must be something that can be implemented when we are NOT operating at our best. Checklists, reminders, redundancy all allow for the chaos around us to take place without us forgetting to do something. Have you tested your plan recently to see if it’s manageable/ Was it truly developed with a crisis in mind? If not, your plan might become part of the crisis.

There are always companies who will choose to be reactive versus proactive in crisis. However, it’s important to differentiate between those companies that are making this choice because they feel lucky or those who don’t know where to start or how to utilize current plans or resources effectively. A little time now will save a lot of time (and money) later.

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## Client message corner

The next newsletter will focus on issues of domestic violence and how it spills over into the workplace.

Look for the main article:

### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: THE NOT SO SILENT KILLER IN THE WORKPLACE.**

## Resource corner: Military resources

- BOOK:

Armstrong K, Best, S., Domenici, P. (2006). *Courage after fire*. Berkeley: Ulysses Press.

- Online

Google: Battlemind

This is a PowerPoint presentation on returning home put out by Walter Reed.

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Supportive Solutions, Inc.

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