

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

The case of the angry urologist – Planning for a crisis will help you avoid one.



The Problem

It was a battle between two urologists at a Florida hospital. The reasons are still unclear. But what started as a war of words became more serious. Sort of.

The crisis occurred when one urologist was caught on hospital video cameras raking a car key across the car of the other urologist and laughing. Police were called. TV cameramen appeared in the ER shortly thereafter.

And people started talking. On camera. The nurses. The video camera technician guy. The custodian. Really.

The Solution

This hospital needed – quickly – a workable, realistic crisis communications plan and staff training before something serious happened.

We worked with hospital leadership and the board of trustees to develop a custom crisis communications plan that included:

- Clear, concise manuals for every department
- A crisis communications team representing every key hospital function
- A crisis communications flow chart for quick decision-making
- Training for every team member on how to use the manual and flow chart; who is responsible for what and how to deal with the media.

The Result

This hospital is now ready – for angry urologists or something worse.

After all, the next crisis could be a breach of patient privacy. Or a disgruntled employee anxious to tell their story to the media. Or a medical error. Or a hurricane. Or an overwhelmed ER.

Communicating effectively in the wake of a crisis is never easy. Organizing communications structures and messages takes time. And there is never enough time during a crisis.