

UiO : **Department of Media and Communication**  
University of Oslo

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## **Crisis Leadership in Higher Education**



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## **Crisis Leadership in Higher Education**

- It's impossible to control whether a crisis will happen at your institution.
- However, you can control the way you react to it and learn to handle it in a way that will protect your students and your institution's reputation.

Program designed by faculty from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Harvard Kennedy School.

## Emergencies: three distinct categories

1. Routine events (for the response organizations involved).
2. Some major events are clearly recognized as containing significant elements of **novelty**. These situations demand very different skills and organizational capabilities.
3. Some events start as routine emergencies and evolve into even more serious problems, eventually becoming true crises.

Leonard & Howitt (2009). High Performance  
in Emergencies: Two Modes of Operation.

## Two Modes of Operation


### Mode R


- Routine emergencies, even when quite severe
- Organized preparation and practiced response.

### Mode C

- Crisis Emergencies: Because of unusual scale, a previously unknown cause, or an atypical combination of causes, responders face **novel challenges**.

Leonard & Howitt (2009). High Performance  
in Emergencies: Two Modes of Operation.

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Characteristics	Response mode	
	Mode R (routine emergencies)	Mode C (crises)
Situational awareness and expertise	High	Low, but openness to recognizing novelty is necessary
Decision making	Rapid and recognition-primed	Cognitively driven, analytic
Scripts	Comprehensive	Unavailable
Customization	Modest	Extensive
Skills required	Well-defined, highly developed	Incompletely specified, but creativity and improvisational ability are important
Leadership	Trained, practiced, and selected for prior training and performance	Adaptive, comfortable sharing authority, skilled in eliciting ideas from the team, and innovative
Leonard & Howitt (2009). High Performance in Emergencies: Two Modes of Operation.		

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Characteristics	Response mode	
	Mode R (routine emergencies)	Mode C (crises)
Command presence	Authority-based, directive	Muted, oriented toward collaboration in developing solutions; more hierarchical in execution
Organizational structure	Hierarchical	Flattened for solution development; more hierarchical for design; hierarchical for execution
Execution	Aims for precision through repeated opportunities for application of routine practices	Must be fault-tolerant because solutions have been improvised and are thus not fully tested or practiced
Leonard & Howitt (2009). High Performance in Emergencies: Two Modes of Operation.		

## Managing Emergency Response

- Organizations that typically handle routine emergencies may experience difficulty in organizing themselves for response to true crises.
- Organizations confronting true crises have to think and **invent** their way through the situation.
- Preparing in advance to confront true crisis situations requires **capabilities-based** (rather than threat-based) planning.
- Organizations facing true crises may need to exhibit different organizational forms in different parts of the response.

Leonard & Howitt (2009). High Performance in Emergencies: Two Modes of Operation.

## Decision-making steps

1. Define the problem
2. Establish the criteria
3. Collect the alternatives
4. Identify the best alternative
5. Develop and implement a plan of action
6. Evaluate and monitor

Guo, Kristina L. (June 2008). "DECIDE: a decision-making model for more effective decision making by health care managers". The Health Care Manager. 27 (2): 118–127.

## Statement of Values

- **Respect** for the rights, differences, and dignity of others
- **Honesty** and **integrity** in all dealings
- Conscientious pursuit of **excellence** in one's work
- **Accountability** for actions and conduct in the workplace

Harvard University, August 2002

## Statement of Values

### UiO

- Akademisk frihet
- Kollegialitet
- Kvalitetssøkende
- Samfunnsansvar, solidaritet og miljø
- Bredde og spiss
- Lærested
- Mennesket i sentrum

### OsloMet

- Lærende
- Nyskapende
- Mangfoldig

### Kristiania

- Ambisiøs
- Praksisnær
- Kreativ
- Tolerant

## The Four-Way Test

1. Is it the truth?
2. Is it fair to all concerned?
3. Will it build goodwill and better friendships?
4. Will it be beneficial to all concerned?

Rotary International

## Players and Roles

- **Elected Officials** hold most of the objective authority and will be asked to make or affirm most of the most important decisions.
- **Analysts** whose role is mainly to advise and give decision support.
- **Operational Commanders** of the response units involved (police, fire, public health, and medical services).

Leonard & Howitt (2004).  
In the Heat of the Moment.