Crisis Communication Guidelines and Templates

Contents

Introduction: How to Use This Template

Plan Review Chart

Date of Revision	Name of Reviser	Approved By	Notes

*The plan review chart is meant for the CMT to keep track of when changes were made, who made the changes, who approved the changes, and other notes.

Steps to develop the Ethical Base

The ethical base is the baseline information that should be given to all stakeholders when a crisis occurs. These steps illustrate the order of development; the order of when the information is released is up to the judgment of the CMT.

Step 1 – Identify the stakeholders

Establish the audience that you are speaking to, whether it be the affected, interested, or influential stakeholders.

Step 2 – Identify the Instructing Information

Information necessary for stakeholders to protect themselves from physical harm.

Step 3 – Identify the Adapting Information

Information telling the stakeholders what has happened and what is being done to fix the situation. Include the necessary who, what, where, when, and why.

Step 4 – Identify the Adjusting Information

An expression of concern for the victims of the crisis. (This does not have to be an admission of guilt and responsibly for the crisis but an expression of concern and sympathy.)
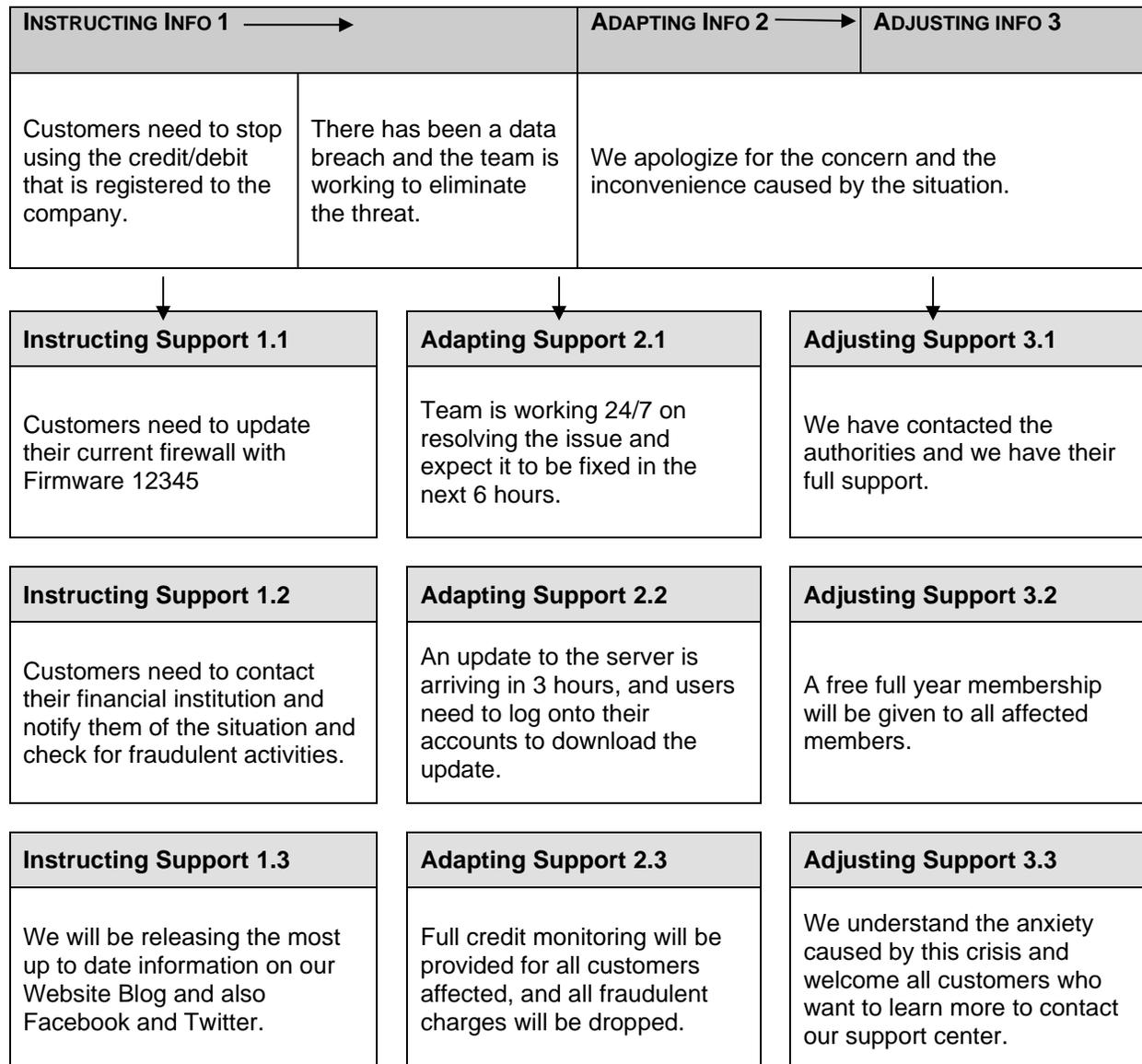
Step 5 – Develop supporting evidence for steps 2, 3, and 4

For each part of the ethical base, provide supporting facts which provide continuity and detail for the message. There should never be more than three supporting pieces of evidence for each part of the ethical base.

Example Ethical Base Development Framework

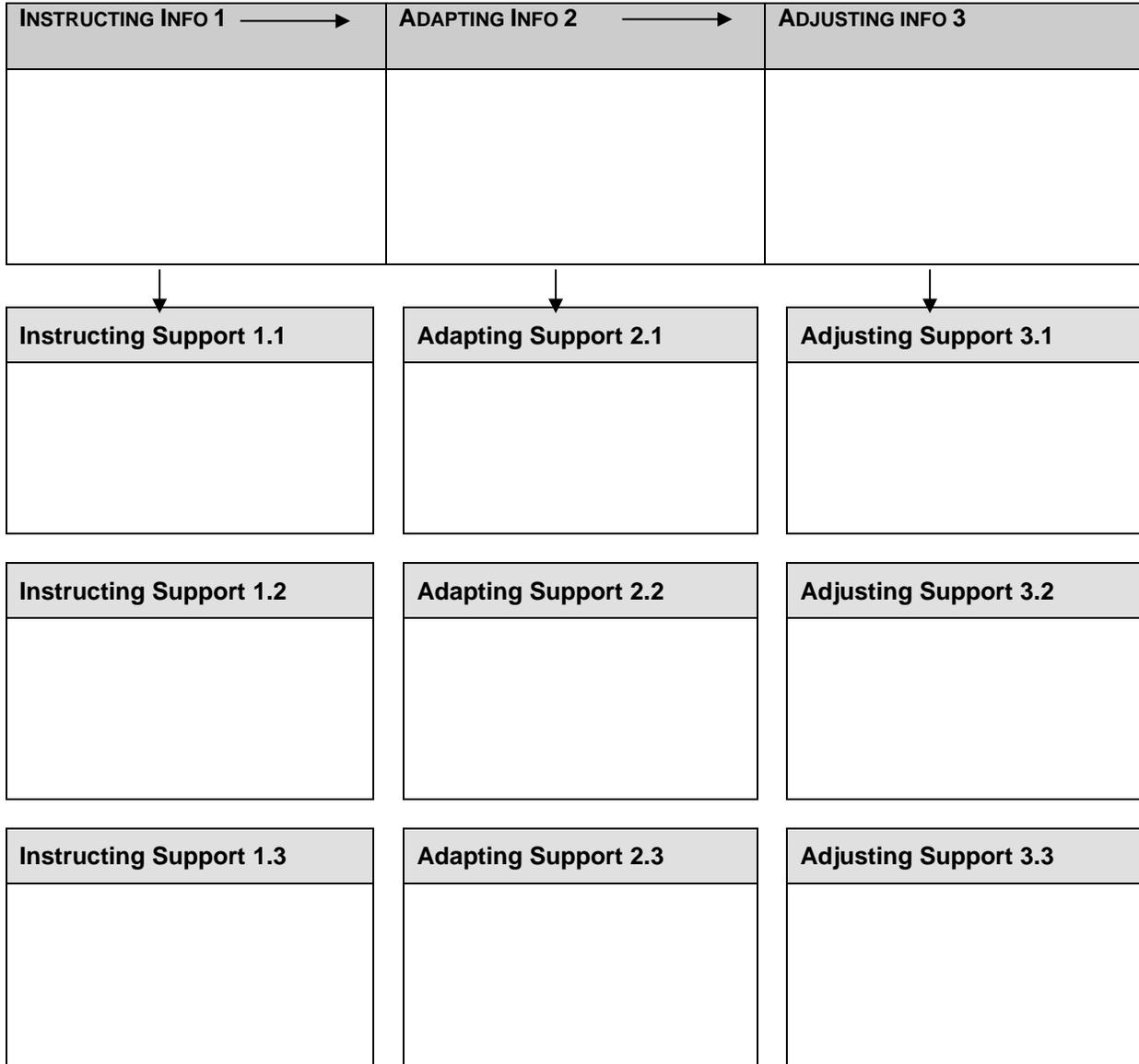**Scenario: Data breach that affected all users in the company**

Stakeholder: Customers

INSTRUCTING INFO 1 ⟶		ADAPTING INFO 2 ⟶	ADJUSTING INFO 3
Customers need to stop using the credit/debit that is registered to the company.	There has been a data breach and the team is working to eliminate the threat.	We apologize for the concern and the inconvenience caused by the situation.	

Instructing Support 1.1	Adapting Support 2.1	Adjusting Support 3.1
Customers need to update their current firewall with Firmware 12345	Team is working 24/7 on resolving the issue and expect it to be fixed in the next 6 hours.	We have contacted the authorities and we have their full support.

Instructing Support 1.2	Adapting Support 2.2	Adjusting Support 3.2
Customers need to contact their financial institution and notify them of the situation and check for fraudulent activities.	An update to the server is arriving in 3 hours, and users need to log onto their accounts to download the update.	A free full year membership will be given to all affected members.

Instructing Support 1.3	Adapting Support 2.3	Adjusting Support 3.3
We will be releasing the most up to date information on our Website Blog and also Facebook and Twitter.	Full credit monitoring will be provided for all customers affected, and all fraudulent charges will be dropped.	We understand the anxiety caused by this crisis and welcome all customers who want to learn more to contact our support center.

Ethical Base Development Framework Template

Scenario:
Stakeholder:

INSTRUCTING INFO 1 →	ADAPTING INFO 2 →	ADJUSTING INFO 3

Instructing Support 1.1	Adapting Support 2.1	Adjusting Support 3.1

Instructing Support 1.2	Adapting Support 2.2	Adjusting Support 3.2

Instructing Support 1.3	Adapting Support 2.3	Adjusting Support 3.3

Crisis Communications – Press Release <u>Example</u>
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Name: Jane Doe
Company Name: Technology Example Inc.
Contact Phone Number: (999) 999-1111
Contact Email Address: janedoe@techexample.com

TECHNOLOGY EXAMPLE INC. DISCOVERS DATA BREACH

TORONTO, January 1, 2015 – Today at 3:30AM EST, Technology Example Inc. confirms that a group of internet activists named "Hackers" has successfully compromised the credit and debit records of all Canadian clients.

The IT team at Technology Example is working around the clock to segregate and eliminate the threat. The current estimated time of recovery is six hours, and updates will be provided on all company communication platforms (presented below).
By end of day, a server update will be provided to prevent future security risks. Customers need to log onto their accounts and install the update.
Technology Example will provide credit monitoring for customers who were affected by the breach, more information regarding this service will be available next week.

Based on our current assessment, we strongly encourage customers to update their firewall with Firmware 1234. As well, customers should contact their financial institutions and notify them of the situation.

Technology Example Inc. is working alongside [Data Breach Authorities] to investigate the cause of the data breach and the areas of vulnerability in the system.
Due to this unfortunate event, Technology Example Inc. will be offering customers a free annual subscription in the following weeks as an apology for the inconvenience this incident has caused.

Our organization recognizes the magnitude of the situation and want to offer our sincerest apologies. We welcome all customers who want to learn more regarding the situation to contact our support center.

Phone Number: (999) 111-9999

Website: www.techexample.com/darksite

Channels of additional information: www.facebook.com/techexample

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Crisis Communications – Press Release <u>Template</u>
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact Name: [Name of Designated Spokesperson]
Contact Phone Number: [Mobile phone of spokesperson]
Contact Email Address: [Direct email of response team]

[Headline]

[LOCATION Month, Date, Year] – [Outlines the release with the 5 W's (who, what, when, where, why]

[Adapting]:
Supporting Info 1:
Supporting Info 2:
Supporting Info 3:
[Instructing]:
Supporting Info 1:
Supporting Info 2:
Supporting Info 3:
[Adjusting]:
Supporting Info 1:
Supporting Info 2:
Supporting Info 3:

Phone Number: [customer service line or crisis line]

Website: [Dark site]

Channels of additional information: [Facebook] [Twitter] [Blog]

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Crisis Communications – Holding Statement <u>Example</u>

Holding statements are designed to provide the media with an initial impression of the situation. Often times many details regarding the crisis are not yet present.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

POTENTIAL DATA BREACH AT TECHNOLOGY EXAMPLE INC.

TORONTO January 1, 2015: Technology Example Inc. confirms that it has received reports of suspicious web activity. Based on the information that is available at this time, the data breach occurred at 1:30AM EST. The IT team indicates that certain client files have been altered but the extent of breach is currently unknown. Technology Example Inc. is suspending all web transactions to protect all users from further security breaches.

The IT team at Technology Example is working around the clock to segregate and eliminate the threat. Customers are encouraged to contact their financial institutions and notify them of the situation.

Technology Example Inc. will be providing further information as soon as it becomes available. Technology Example Inc. will be holding a press conference at CONFERENCE CENTER at 1:00PM EST at TOWN HALL.

For additional information:

Name: Jane Doe
Title: Chief of Communications
Organization: Technology Example Inc.
Mobile Number: (999) 999-1111
Phone Number: (999) 111-9999
Email: janedoe@techexample.com
Website: www.techexample.com/darksite
Channels of additional information: www.facebook.com/techexample
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Crisis Communications – Holding Statement <u>Template</u>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Headline]

Date: [Date of issue]
Time: [Time of issue]

[LOCATION Month Date, Year]: [Company name] confirms that it has received reports of [description of event]. Based on the information that is available at this time, the [event] occurred at [time and location]. [First responders] indicate that [details of the initial response]. [Company name] is currently [emergency response measures] to protect [affected stakeholders].

 [Adapting]: [if available]
Supporting Info:
 [Instructing]: [if available]
Supporting Info:
[Adjusting]: [if available]
Supporting Info:

[Organization name] will be providing further information as soon as it become available. [Provide details of press conferences or media briefings].

For additional information:

Name: [name of designated spokesperson]
Title: [title of the designated spokesperson]
Organization: [Name of organization]
Mobile Number: [Mobile phone of spokesperson]
Phone Number: [Phone number of customer service line]
Email: [Direct email of response team]
Website: [Dark site]
Channels of additional information: [Facebook] [Twitter] [Blog]
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External Message Release Approval Form

To ensure the accuracy and consistency of the released messages, it is a best practice to have the legal or the communications department approve the message before approval.

Document the communications release:

☐ Message Map/Statement ☐ Letter
☐ Press Release ☐ Website Content
☐ Other:

_____

Approval Timeline:

☐ 0-30 Minutes ☐ 30 Minutes- 2 Hours
☐ 2- 5 Hours ☐ 1 Day
☐ 2-3 Days ☐ _____

Changes made/Changes needed:

●

Approval:

☐ Approved
☐ Approved with minor changes
☐ Not approved, make changes and resubmit

Approved By:

Signature:

Date:

Time:

_____