



Common Journalists' Questions About Emergency or Crisis

Journalists are likely to ask six questions in a crisis (who, what, where, when, why, how) that relate to three broad topics:

- What happened?
- What caused it to happen?
- What does it mean?

Examples of specific questions include:

- What is your name and title?
- What are your job responsibilities?
- What are your qualifications?
- Can you tell us what happened?
- When did it happen?
- Where did it happen?
- Who was harmed?
- How many people were harmed, injured, or killed?
- Are those that were harmed getting help?
- How are those who were harmed getting help?
- What can others do to help?
- Is the situation under control?
- Is there anything good that you can tell us?
- Is there any immediate danger?
- What is being done in response to what happened?
- Who is in charge?
- What can we expect next?
- What are you advising people to do?
- How long will it be before the situation returns to normal?
- What help has been requested or offered from others?
- What responses have you received?
- Can you be specific about the types of harm that occurred?

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- What are the names of those that were harmed?
- Can we talk to persons who were harmed?
- How much damage occurred?
- What other damage may have occurred?
- How certain are you about damage?
- How much damage do you expect?
- What are you doing now?
- Who else is involved in the response?
- Why did this happen?
- What was the cause?
- Did you have any forewarning that this might happen?
- Why wasn't this prevented from happening?
- What else can go wrong?
- If you are not sure of the cause, what is your best guess?
- Who caused this to happen?
- Who is to blame?
- Could this have been avoided?
- Do you think those involved handled the situation well enough?
- When did your response to this begin?
- When were you notified that something had happened?
- Who is conducting the investigation?
- What are you going to do after the investigation?
- What have you found out so far?
- Why was more not done to prevent this from happening?
- What is your personal opinion?
- What are you telling your own family?
- Are all those involved in agreement?
- Are people over reacting?
- Which laws are applicable?
- Has anyone broken the law?
- What challenges are you facing?
- Has anyone made mistakes?
- What mistakes have been made?
- Have you told us everything you know?
- What are you not telling us?
- What effects will this have on the people involved?
- What precautionary measures were taken?
- Do you accept responsibility for what happened?
- Has this ever happened before?
- Can this happen elsewhere?
- What is the worst-case scenario?
- What lessons were learned?
- Were those lessons implemented?
- What can be done to prevent this from happening again?
- What would you like to say to those harmed and to their families?
- Is there any continuing the danger?
- Are people out of danger? Are people safe?
- Will there be inconvenience to employees or to the public?
- How much will all this cost?
- Are you able and willing to pay the costs?
- Who else will pay the costs?
- When will we find out more?
- What steps need to be taken to avoid a similar event?
- Have these steps already been taken? If not, why not?
- What does this all mean?
- Is there anything else you want to tell us?