

Press Briefing Kit





Press Briefing Checklist

A press briefing is one of the most effective ways to communicate with the news media during a crisis. But what kind of information should go into that statement? The key is to approach every press briefing with your own agenda in mind and to anticipate the needs of reporters. We recommend the following:

Include the essentials.

What? Who? When? Where? Why? How? These are the 5Ws and 1H all reporters learn in journalism class. Your statement should address as many of them as is possible or appropriate.

Focus on the public's interest.

In a crisis, the public is primarily concerned about how your event or issue affects them. For example, is your chemical release confined to plant property or does it have off-site impact? If the former, reassure the public. If the latter, acknowledge it and explain what steps you're taking to remedy the situation.

Express the appropriate sentiment.

One of the best ways to put a “human face” on your company or organization is to express concern, regret, compassion, etc. Every crisis is an opportunity to try to connect with the public. When there are injuries or fatalities, you must say the right thing. Even when the public is inconvenienced (e.g., road closures, evacuations, etc.) you have an opportunity to offer an apology. Remember, before you can reach someone on an intellectual level, you must connect with them on an emotional level.



Sample Press Briefing Statement

Around 10:00 this morning, a chlorine railcar was being loaded at the Collins Chemical plant in Hammond, Indiana. During the loading process, the hose transferring chlorine from the storage tank to the railcar failed, causing a release of chlorine. The automatic shut-off valve designed to stop the flow of chlorine failed to activate.

Within 15 minutes, plant emergency responders manually shut off the valve on top of the storage tank. We thank them for their quick action which prevented any chlorine gas from leaving plant property. So, fortunately there was no off-site impact to the community.

However, we are concerned about a member of our Collins Chemical family who is being treated and observed at Deaconess Hospital after inhaling some chlorine. We know he is in good medical hands, and we are in touch with him and his family.

The safety of our employees and our community remains at the core of what we do and how we do it. We're currently investigating the exact cause of this incident.

Chlorine is an industrial chemical used in a variety of applications, including treating water and manufacturing plastics and paper.

Thank You!

We hope that you found this Press Briefing Kit useful.

About Us

The Ammerman Experience is a communications skills development firm that does one thing and one thing only: we show people how to effectively and confidently reach and influence others through the spoken word.

We ask them to change the way they think about communicating, and show them how to eliminate comfortable, but outdated and self-defeating, communication patterns. For over 40 years we've trained thousands of people to face the media, manage a crisis, speak at public meetings and deliver memorable, effective analyst, sales and other business presentations.

We can help you and others in your organization improve the communication skills that have a direct bearing on the ability to reach others through the spoken word.

Contact us and tell us about your situation or needs. We'll be happy to offer our perspective or develop a proposal for your review.

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