Dr. Rick Franklin - An Organizational Resource

Three S's of Contingency Planning



Good planning isn't our idea, it's God's idea. Read through the Bible, and it quickly becomes apparent God has a plan. God's plan informs and guides salvation, the Church, the future and much more. So whether we face times of certainty or uncertainty, it's prudent to have a plan.

The need for good planning quickly becomes heightened when we face challenges and crises. In fact, it's possible—even probable—your best laid plans are now "on hold" or possibly "out the window" as you scramble to develop new contingency plans.

To help you Lead Different and to remain Jesus-centered during times of crisis, here are three simple yet effective "S's" to help guide you in developing contingency plans.

Safety

Looking to Jesus and the example he sets for us, Paul drives home an important principle for us: "Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:4). In other words, in crisis we begin with a focus on safety—the safety and well-being of our staff, volunteers, the people we serve and so on.

What decisions need to be made and what changes can you implement to protect and preserve your people? What will keep them safe? What will enable them to continue contributing to the needs of your organization over the course of the crises and beyond?

Think in phases—an immediate phase that begins today and may last for the next two to four weeks. A second phase may begin a month out and last two to three months. And then a potential third phase that looks further at what may be needed beyond four months from today, if the crisis looks like it will extend well into the future.

Stewardship

Effective contingency planning next focuses on "calculating the cost" (Luke 14:28) and stewarding resources (Luke 16:10-12; 19:11-18). Every organization stewards or manages many different resources—money, people, time, facilities, technology, etc.

It's important to manage these resources well, especially in the midst of a crisis that could translate into reduced resources.

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For example, giving may drop, it may take longer to do what you normally do, your facilities may become vacant or may become needed and used in new ways you didn't originally plan for.

Consider each of these areas of resource and conduct a quick current status report of each. Then consider your current levels of usage while also taking into account both savings you may have due to a slowdown or an increase in usage if you anticipate using more of your resources. Based on your current and future usage, how long will your current resources last?

This will help you determine adjustments to make to ensure the longer-term viability of your organization. Again, it's helpful to think in terms of phases, starting with today and the next two to four weeks as phase one, followed by phases two and three, looking further and further into the future.

Service

Crisis means change—change that wasn't necessarily anticipated or even wanted. But such times of change can create new opportunities to innovate and serve the needs of others around you.

"Greater love has no one than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Serving others may involve sacrifice, but a crisis presents an unplanned opportunity to serve those around you.

What are needs you and others are facing you are qualified and equipped to meet? What resources do you have that would help those around you? What knowledge and experience do you have at your disposal that would make a significant difference for others?

Crisis is often a time of turning inward, focusing on our own needs. However, as Jesus-centered leaders, we can lead differently during challenging times by looking beyond our own needs to the needs of others (Romans 15:2).

Arrow Leadership is here to serve you. If you have a specific question or need that's come up reading through this resource, please reach out to us!



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