

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

For Government Leaders



NLC-RISC RISK INFORMATION
SHARING CONSORTIUM

JULIE PARKER
Communic@tions



WV WATER CRISIS

LIVE

GARY SOUTHERN

PRES., FREEDOM INDUSTRIES

YOUR PRESENTER

CHRISTOPHER MANNINO

- Retired Chief of Police
- 25-Year Law Enforcement Veteran
- FBI National Academy Graduate
- Vice President of JPC
- Master's Degree in Political Science
- National Policing Institute Fellow



CRISIS HITS HOME



News / News Cc

WWII vet's death a textbook case of excessive force, but no hashtag for him



Park Forest police Officer Craig Taylor, 43, is charged with felony reckless conduct in connection with World War II veteran John Wrana's death in July 2013.



LOCAL NEWS >

Elderly Man Dies Hours After Being Shot By Police With Beanbag Rounds

CBS NEWS
CHICAGO

JULY 27, 2013 / 11:24 AM / CBS CHICAGO



PARK FOREST, Ill. (CBS) -- A 95-year-old Park Forest nursing home resident died several hours after a confrontation with officers, reports WBBM's Mike Krauser.

Park Forest Police say in a statement they were called to a Victory Centre nursing home at 101 Main Street to assist a private ambulance company with what they say was a combative 95-year-old male resident who was being involuntarily committed for medical treatment.

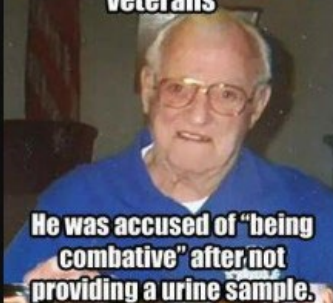
Elderly Man Dies Hours After Police Confrontation





This is how they treat
our vets?

At 95, John Wrana was
one of the oldest WW2
veterans



He was accused of "being
combative" after not
providing a urine sample.

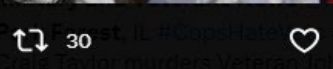


Officer Taylor took out a
shotgun and shot him 5 times.

His limp body was then
handcuffed as he laid bleeding
to death.



"I was just doing my job,"
says Officer Taylor



30 st, IL #CopKills 11



Occupy Wall Street with a Genera... @OccupyWall... · Jun 24, 2014 ...

Park Forest, IL police shoot 95yr/old WW2 Vet John Vrana jr. to death by
beanbag for refusing to go to hospital ow.ly/ypvQr #FTP



23



9



Deirdre Whippen well I guess you all covered my feelings in this fucking piece
of shit Scum bag ! assclown Needs to go to jail !! end of story bye bye you
murderous mother fucking coward

Like · Reply ·  3 · April 30, 2014 at 9:50am



JULIE PARKER *Communic@tions*



Officer found not guilty on felony reckless conduct charges in beanbag shooting

Share G+ Tweet Email



ProPublica @propublica · Feb 4, 2015

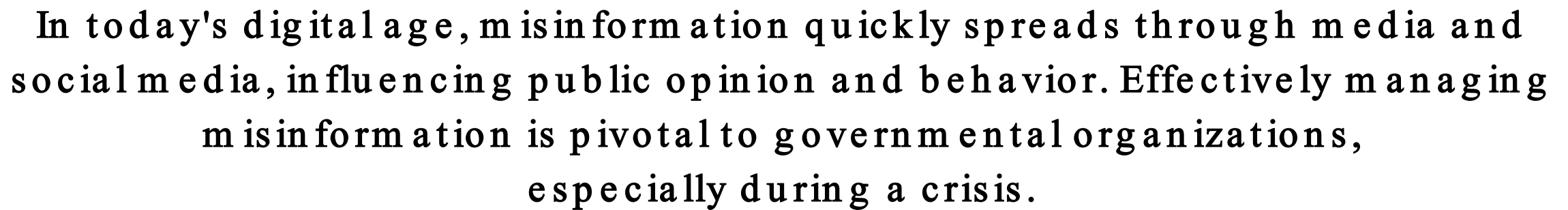
Park Forest police officer acquitted after fatally shooting knife-wielding WWII vet w/ five successive **beanbag** rounds
chicagotribune.com/news/local/bre...



THE DISINFORMATION AGE



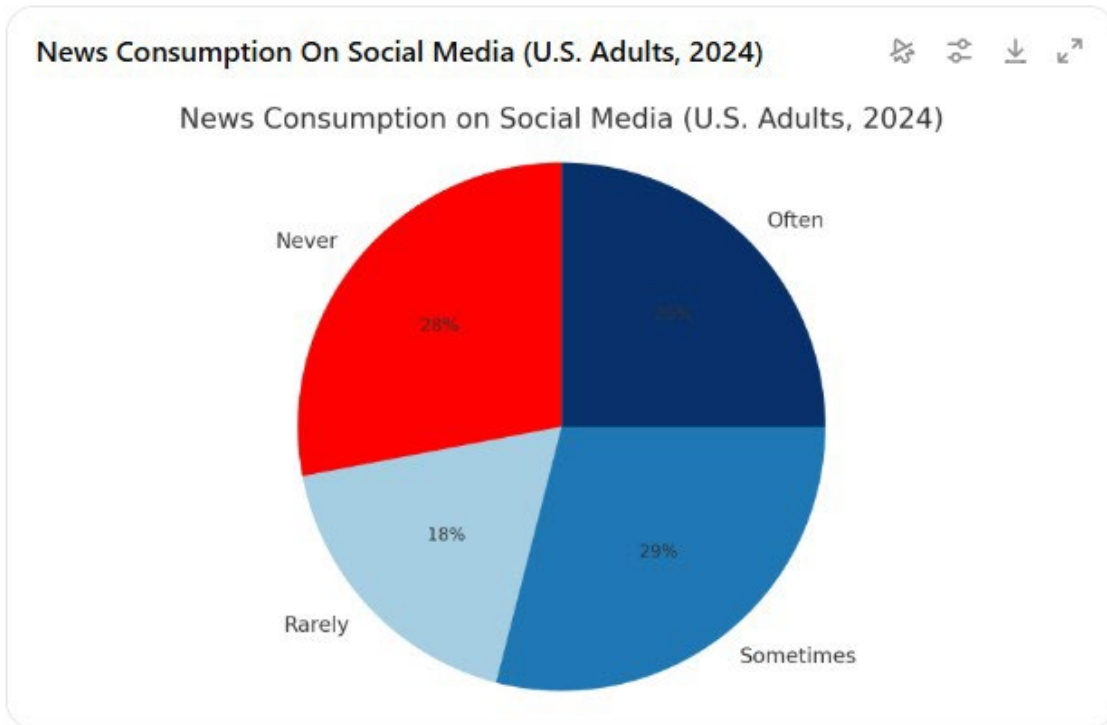
JULIE PARKER *Communic@tions*



JULIE PARKER *Communic@tions*

SOCIAL MEDIA MATTERS

Social media is the most common source of news for Americans.



Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Schulz, A., Andl, S., Robertson, C. T., & Nielsen, R. K. (2022). *Digital news report 2022*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. Retrieved from https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/Digital_News-Report_2022.pdf



A November 2024 Pew Research Center survey found that **21% of U.S. adults** regularly consume news from social media influencers—a figure that jumps to **37% among those aged 18 to 29**



Harnessing the **Potential** of Social Media Influencers

Combining innovation with proven crisis communications practices | BY KEHAULANI CERIZO AND CHRISTOPHER MANNINO

It is one thing for government officials to respond to different levels of disasters, critical incidents, and emergencies grounded in reality. It is another entirely to manage social media-driven conspiracy theories and rampant misinformation sweeping through communities already reeling from devastation.

During the deadliest wildfires in the United States in more than a century, public information officers (PIOs) in Maui County, Hawai'i, USA, were forced to address both of these challenges—simultaneously.

As they worked tirelessly to manage the practicalities of a major disaster response—communicating about safe water sources, open shelters, and food distribution hubs—they also found themselves battling an onslaught of misinformation. Conspiracy theories claiming that blue space lasers were behind the fires, or that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was on Maui



The rise of citizen journalism on social media—where ordinary people report news firsthand—has revolutionized how information spreads.

source of information. This capability is largely dependent on having a well-structured crisis communications plan and a team trained to execute it effectively, 24 hours a day. Even among those organizations that



Aerial view of a commercial area in Lahaina on August 9, 2023, courtesy of the Civil Air Patrol.

RUN IT LIKE A
NEWSROOM.

(IT'S YOUR
NEWS TO
BREAK.)



JULIE PARKER *Communic@tions*

THERE ISN'T
TIME IN A CRISIS
TO CREATE A
PLAN.

IT MUST BE
MUSCLE
MEMORY.



ELEMENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

1. Defined Goals
2. Identified
Messengers/Roles
3. Defined Audiences
4. Defined
Communication Flows





CRITICAL INCIDENT RESPONSE COMMUNICATIONS CHECKLIST

1. Leadership learns of crisis (Communications team is a critical component of leadership team)
2. Begin gathering information
3. Communicate internally
4. Share on social media for fastest form of communication (What we know now)
5. Consider if media interviews are necessary and advantageous
6. Monitor social media and media
7. Prepare holding statement
8. Potentially prepare for news conference
9. Issue news release
10. Continue to monitor social media and media

WHAT'S YOUR GOAL(S)?

- Public safety through calls to action
- Public cooperation which aids your response
- Building trust in your response
- Keeping the community and media informed of facts
- Correcting misinformation
- Relieving fear, anxiety, or anger
- Demonstrating transparency
- Humanizing government entities





Who is your
audience?

How are their
experiences
different from
yours?



WHO ARE YOUR MESSENGERS?

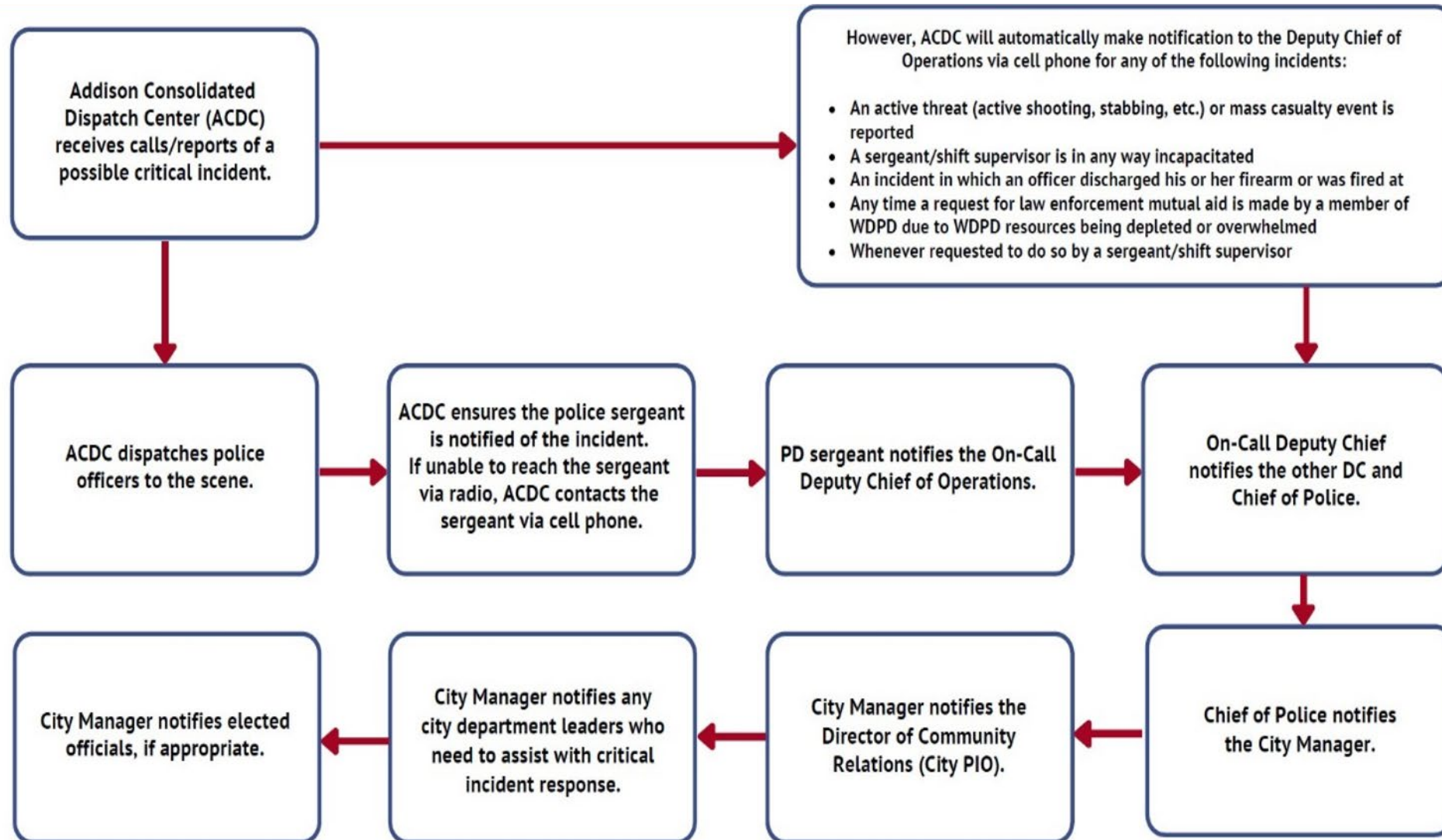
Consider someone who has:

- Emotional intelligence
- Maturity to understand different audiences
- Understanding of how your organization operates
- Trust to represent the organization

EVERYTHING YOU SAY AND DO REPRESENTS YOUR BRAND



WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?



Messaging Templates for Initial Communication

EMERGENCY ALERT TEMPLATES

INCIDENT

Person with
Gun/Other Weapon

Report of Shots
Fired

Active Shooter

Active Major Crime
Scene

Missing Vulnerable
Adult/Silver Alert

TWEET

We are responding to (person/man/woman) with a (weapon) reported near (location). Avoid the area. More information to follow.

SHOTS FIRED: We are responding to the report of gunshots near (location). Avoid the area. More information to follow.

ACTIVE SHOOTER REPORTED: (location). We are responding. Avoid area. Media staging and more information to follow.

For schools add: School lockdown in place. A unification location will be provided soon. Do not respond to the school.

(SHOOTING/ROBBERY/HOMICIDE, ETC.) INVESTIGATION: (location). (Street name is closed to traffic.) Avoid the area. Call (non-emergency number) or Crime Stoppers at (phone number) with any information.

MISSING and/or SILVER ALERT: (name of person, age) last seen (date, location, time). (Identify vulnerability if appropriate). Last seen wearing (clothing description). (Vehicle description, if applicable) Call (phone number) if located.

TEST YOUR PLAN!

Active Threat Event Tabletop Exercise University of Mississippi Medical Center



For Official Use Only (FOUO)

TEST YOUR PLAN!

BONSU STRATEGY: BUILD TRUST BEFORE THE CRISIS



CREATE OF CULTURE OF “CATCHING” PERSONNEL UPHOLDING YOUR VALUES

Chiefs,

During the above incident (21PF13664), the resident from [REDACTED] Western Avenue identified as [REDACTED] damaged the victims juvenile sons bicycle during a mental episode. The rear tire of the bicycle was completely bent due to Nwaokai throwing it across the front yard. The victim did not wish to pursue charges as the offender is an extremely large aggressive subject whom the PFPD has had many encounters with. The victim only wished to have the incident documented to notify her leaser. Sgt. Moore and Officer Keith took it upon themselves to respond to our bike impound in an attempt to locate any old/unclaimed bicycle parts to fix the young juveniles damaged bicycle. Officers subsequently located the exact make and model bicycle from the impound. Sgt. Moore brought the recovered bicycle to the PFPD and determined the damaged bicycle's frame was newer and in better shape than the bicycle located inside the impound. Sgt. Moore gathered tools and removed a tire from the older bicycle located in the impound and replaced the tire from the juvenile's damaged bicycle. The bicycle was then driven to the juvenile at [REDACTED] Western Avenue in a full functioning state. Neither Officer advised me of what they were doing until I noticed Sgt. Moore working on the bicycle in the garage. Additionally, Sgt. Moore and Officer Keith have no knowledge that I'm notifying you of the incident but I believe this incident is a direct reflection of two great Officers going above and beyond for a kid in need. I'm not easily impressed but both Officers actions today made me proud to work alongside and have these two Officers assigned to my shift.

POSITIVELY REINFORCE THOSE VALUES



Park Forest Police Department ✓

Published by Christopher Mannino · September 1 at 2:15 PM ·



A message from Chief Christopher Mannino:

Last night several officers responded to a call where a man in a mental health crisis damaged a child's bicycle. The child's parents did not wish to prosecute, a decision we supported, but our service did not end there.

Sergeant Julius Moore and Officer Jennifer Keith, of their own volition, went to our bicycle impound where abandoned and recovered bicycles are kept and searched until they found a match for the damaged bike. They located tools, swapped out parts, and returned the bicycle to the child as if it had never been broken.

This occurred overnight, and the only reason the Deputy Chiefs and I are aware of it is because their supervisor, Commander John DeCeault, saw what they were doing, was impressed by their efforts, and ensured that his bosses knew about this act of service. This picture is captured from our in-house surveillance video.

If you've read my notes before, then you might recall I often say that I can't promise we will always get it right. We are human. But so often, we more than get it right. In this case, two officers took the time to make sure a kid with a busted-up bicycle got it back as if nothing had happened. And a Commander recognized exceptional work when he saw it and made sure his bosses knew about it. My hope is that when you hear about accounts like this, you're as proud of the men and women who serve on this department as I am.

Stay well.



28,983

People Reached

5,096

Engagements

[Boost Post](#)



1.4K

196 Comments 172 Shares

PUBLICLY CELEBRATE WINS



3 REASONS TO SAY NOTHING

And Why You Should Still Say
Something



IS LIABILITY THE ONLY RISK?

Anything you
say can and
will be used
against you...



Transparency is Good Government



What do you want to know about the City of Henderson? In an effort to be transparent, we make all data available to you. We track everything from businesses licenses, neighborhood info, or even unemployment rates. If we track it, you can see it here: henderson-nv.data.socrata.com





NEED TO KNOW VS REASON TO WITHHOLD



DEBUNKING A COMMON COMMUNICATIONS MYTH

**“We don’t want to panic
the public.”**

DEBUNKING COMMUNICATIONS MYTHS

Research shows providing more
information reduces fear and
anxiety.

Olson, M., Walpole, H., Sutton, J., Cain, L.B., Waugh N., and Wood, M.M.
(under review). The impact of hazard naming in Wireless Emergency Alerts:
Enhancing protective action decision making and organizational attitudes.

DEBUNKING COMMUNICATIONS MYTHS

**Naming the hazard...
regardless of the hazard
type...improves
understanding, enhances
organizational reputation,
and increases perceived
organizational transparency.**

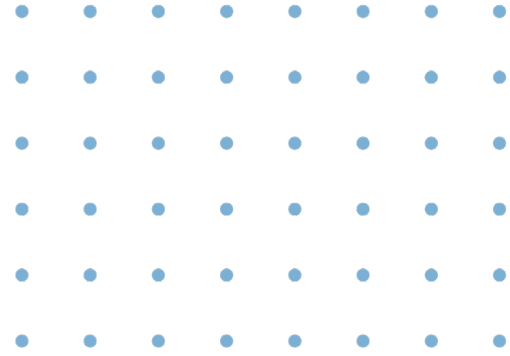
Olson, M., Walpole, H., Sutton, J., Cain, L.B., Waugh N., and Wood, M.M.
(under review). The impact of hazard naming in Wireless Emergency Alerts:
Enhancing protective action decision making and organizational attitudes.

Community Alert Update

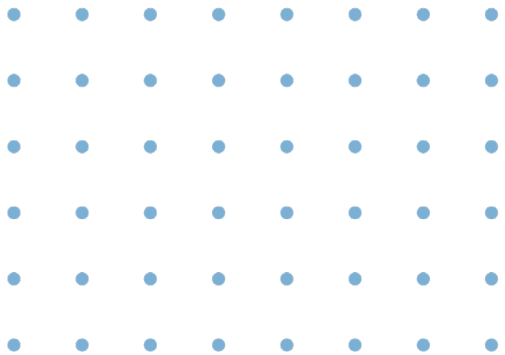
April 28, 2025 - 6:35PM

Please stay out of the area of the
300 Block of Arroyo Dr. An active
incident is ongoing with multiple
agencies involved. If in the area,
please shelter in place until further
notice.

DEBUNKING COMMUNICATIONS MYTHS



“We don’t know what to say.”





TO SHARE OR NOT?

1. Will sharing this information compromise an investigation?
2. Will sharing this information invade a reasonable expectation of privacy?
3. Is there any legal prohibition to sharing this information?
4. Is it possible this information may change?

QUALIFY WHEN ONLY REASONABLY CERTAIN

While this information is subject to change...

At this time it is believed...

We have reason to believe...

According to witnesses...

To date we have determined, found, discovered...

While this matter is still under investigation...

What we know now is...



TO SHARE OR NOT?

Will this eventually
be public
information
anyway?

DURING THE CRISIS



1. Define the Problem
2. What We're Doing About the Problem (Response)
3. What Your Audience Can Do About the Problem (Call to Action)

ONLY 3 ANSWERS YOU'LL EVER GIVE TO THE MEDIA

- I know, and here's the answer.
- I know but can't share, and here's why.
- I don't know, but I'll find out.





When it's a
reputational
crisis, pop
the bubble
on bad news.



JJ Watt ✓
@JJWatt

I was just told somebody leaked some personal information about me and it's going to be reported on today.

I went into A-Fib on Wednesday, had my heart shocked back into rhythm on Thursday and I'm playing today.

That's it.

12:14 · 10/2/22 · [Twitter for iPhone](#)

7,900 Retweets **5,525** Quote Tweets **133K** Likes

Pop the
bubble on
bad news.

One of the biggest mistakes we see leaders make is acting as if their role is to defend the involved personnel.



The other is to
throw them under
the bus.



**Does this
trigger an
investigation
or review?**



OBJECTIVE ANALYSES

1. What was right?
2. What could have been done better?
3. What was wrong?





**Get Good News
Out Fast,
Bad News Out
Faster**

**Effective Crisis
Communications
Requires Urgency**



SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

JULIE PARKER *Communic@tions*

DURING THE CRISIS



1. Define the Problem
2. What We're Doing About the Problem (Response)
3. What Your Audience Can Do About the Problem (Call to Action)

Define the
Problem:
Suspicious Person

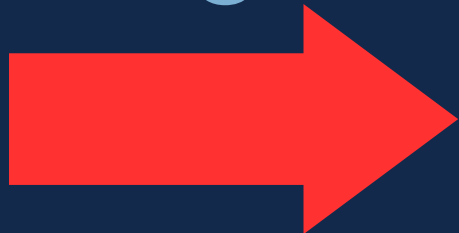
What We're Doing:
Lockdown



What Our
Audience Can Do:
Do Not Come to the
School



Update every
15-30 minutes.

Even if it's to
share that
nothing has
changed.








 **Northwestern** 
@NorthwesternU


NUPD responding to Evanston campus emergency.
Remain in safe place. If not on campus, stay away.
More info will be provided when available.





4:17 PM · Mar 14, 2018 · Blackboard Connect for Education

232 Retweets 32 Quote Tweets 136 Likes

 Tweet your reply Reply

 **Keta Burke-Williams** @keta_bw · Mar 14, 2018
Replying to @NorthwesternU
why is it taking so long to secure the situation? is there a more recent update?

 1  1  2 

DUMP THE JARGON

What jargon is
common in
government?





Park Forest Police

@ParkForestPD



PFPD investigating drowning death of a 10-yr-old juvenile who entered the Aqua Center after hours, overnight. Full release posted on our FB page. Our sincerest condolences to friends and family of the child on this tragic loss.

7:50 AM · Jul 3, 2018



6



See Park Forest Police's other Tweets

"While any death is reason to grieve, the death of a child is particularly troubling, and the Park Forest Police Department offers its sincerest condolences to the loved ones and friends of the juvenile," the department said in a Facebook post.

NEGATIVE COMMENT RESPONSE FLOW CHART

NEGATIVE
COMMENT

TROLL

IGNORE

Consider: Does it
violate your social
media comment
policy?

MISINFORMATION

CORRECT

Link to correct
information, if
available.
Then leave it.

LEGITIMATE
COMPLAINT

ASSIST

If possible, or direct
to someone who can.
(Take the
conversation offline.)

THE ART OF THE NEWS RELEASE

Create a Website Account - Manage notification subscriptions, save form progress and more.

Website Sign In



Police

Library

Amphitheater



Search...



Public Notices

Government

Services

Business

Discover Boca

How Do I...



About Boca Raton

Media Releases

Stay Connected

Marketing Policies

Student Resources

Love Boca Raton

Virtual Meeting
Backgrounds

Home > Government > Departments > City Manager's Office > Communications & Marketing > Media Releases

Media Releases

News Flash



Fountains of Wayne & Weezer Headline Centennial Concert

April 23, 2025

[Read on...](#)



Boca Raton's Spanish River Park Awarded Prestigious Blue Flag Beach Award

April 22, 2025

[Read on...](#)



JULIE PARKER *Communications*

PRESS RELEASE

Organization Name (Anytown Police Department)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 29, 2024

Contact: PIO's Name
 Desk Phone Number | Email

Headline That Summarizes Main Message
Sub-headline Can Show What Action Is Being Taken

(City, State) – [Organization Name] today announced a new initiative for your region, designed to enhance public safety and community engagement. This landmark decision, following extensive consultation with local law enforcement and community leaders, represents a significant step forward in our commitment to transparency and accountability. The initiative, which will be implemented over the next six months, includes a series of public forums, town hall meetings, and a dedicated online portal for community feedback. We are confident that this collaborative effort will result in a more secure and vibrant community for all. For more information, please contact our Public Information Officer at [Phone Number] or visit our website at [Website URL].

The second paragraph provides additional context and details about the initiative. It explains the rationale behind the decision, the goals of the initiative, and the expected outcomes. This paragraph is crucial for ensuring that the audience understands the significance of the announcement and the steps being taken to address the community's needs. The initiative is a direct result of our ongoing commitment to public safety and community engagement. We are pleased to announce this new initiative, which will be implemented over the next six months. The initiative includes a series of public forums, town hall meetings, and a dedicated online portal for community feedback. We are confident that this collaborative effort will result in a more secure and vibrant community for all.

Subsequent paragraphs can be used to provide background information, quotes from additional sources, and other information that supports the main message. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Praesent sit amet nisl. Vivamus nisl. Nulla efficitur ac ligula quis pharetra. Pellentesque vehicula dapibus tellus. Integer lacus erat, rhoncus et lorem quis, rhoncus cursus quam. Nam volutpat sapien quis convallis consectetur.

###

(Signifies completion of press release)

NEWS

Police officer shot in Chicago suburb is University of Indianapolis grad

by: [Matt Adams](#)

Posted: Mar 21, 2016 / 07:29 AM EDT

Updated: Mar 21, 2016 / 07:32 AM EDT



Timothy Jones (Photo from Park Forest Police Department)



Christopher Mannino, then deputy chief in Park Forest, addresses the media near where an officer was shot March 19, 2016, while responding to a report of a break-in. (Abel Uribe / Chicago Tribune)





1,718,078 people reached

Boost Post



Park Forest Police Department

Published by Christopher Mannino [?] · April 6, 2016 · 🌐

For Immediate Release:

Officer Timothy Jones, who was critically wounded in the line-of-duty on Saturday, March 19, 2016 after suffering gunshot wounds while attempting to take a suspect into custody, has been released from the Intensive Care Unit of Advocate Christ Medical Center and has been transported to a rehabilitation center at an undisclosed location. Officer Jones is not on life support, and his condition has stabilized to allow transport to this new facility. He is minimally conscious, and while he has a very long road to recovery and his long-term prognosis is uncertain, the steps he has taken in less than three weeks after suffering such a devastating injury give cause for hope, and also demonstrate the strength and will with which he is fighting.

The Park Forest Police Department would like to thank the professional medical staff of Advocate Christ Medical Center for the excellent care of Tim while he was with them, the numerous law enforcement and other public safety agencies that have given support during this time, as well as the incredible outpouring of support from the community. Your continued prayers, concern, and support are greatly appreciated.

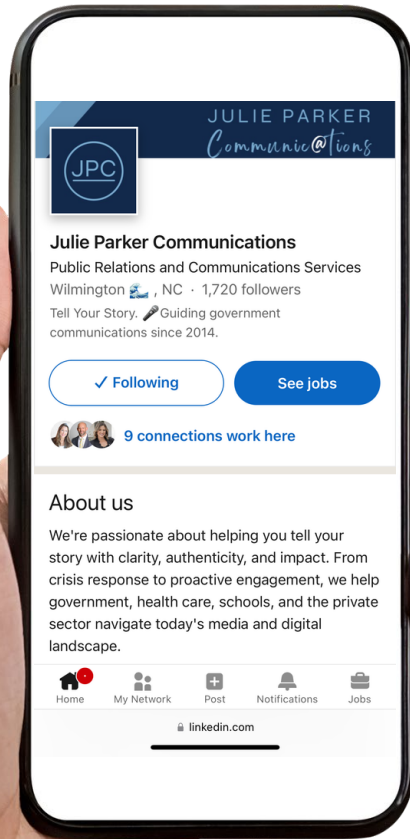
The photograph of Tim accompanying this post was taken in the fall of 2015, just as his career in law enforcement was beginning. In a short time, his work in uniform demonstrated enthusiasm, integrity, charisma, concern, and compassion. He is now demonstrating fight, strength and resiliency. We will continue to stand by Tim and his family through this journey, and will share updates as we are able, in coordination with the privacy naturally requested by the family. Thank you again, to everyone who has offered concern and well-wishes, in whatever form it has taken.

#TimStrong

NEW AT 6



LET'S CONNECT



CHRISTOPHER MANINNO



Julie Parker Communications



@ChiefMannino



Christopher Mannino



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