

Coping with the Crisis – Checklist 6

Delivering Bad News

It may feel as if that's pretty much all you've been doing over the months of the pandemic. News about loss of income, closure of services, furloughing, staff redundancies. But there is a long road ahead of us and there will inevitably be more bad news to come for many of us. Bad news is, in many ways, like any other kind of news – prepare how you're going to share and you will minimise the negative impact and help people to deal with it.

Key things to know	Have you...	
People deserve to be told the truth. We are working with adults, not children. They have a right to know the reality of the situation you are facing.	Told the truth?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't just jump in. If there are things that you can 'know' or find out before sharing then you should – but don't delay truth telling because you're trying to have all the answers.	Thought through the possibilities so that you can explain clearly what the implications are?	<input type="checkbox"/>
When people hear bad news they typically go through the normal cycles of shock, denial, anger, grief and then healing. Prepare your message to take account of that.	Considered what the emotional impact might be and how to handle it?	<input type="checkbox"/>
You'll have been living with the bad news for a bit, probably. Give people time to think and catch up with where you are.	Built in time for people to absorb the bad news and have time to adjust and think of questions etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>

When things are hard you need to communicate more, not less. People need to hear from their CEO, their senior managers, their team leaders, the trustees, ALL the time. Plan in time and make it regular – weekly updates, daily briefings and so on. Even if there is no news you still need to communicate it.

Planned for lots of communication at all different levels?

Sources of further support

Further reading from DSC

www.dsc.org.uk/publications

Tips for delivering bad news

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesleadershipforum/2012/05/30/10-commandments-for-delivering-bad-news/>

This Coping with the Crisis Checklist is part of a series, visit www.dsc.org.uk/crisischecklists for more

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