



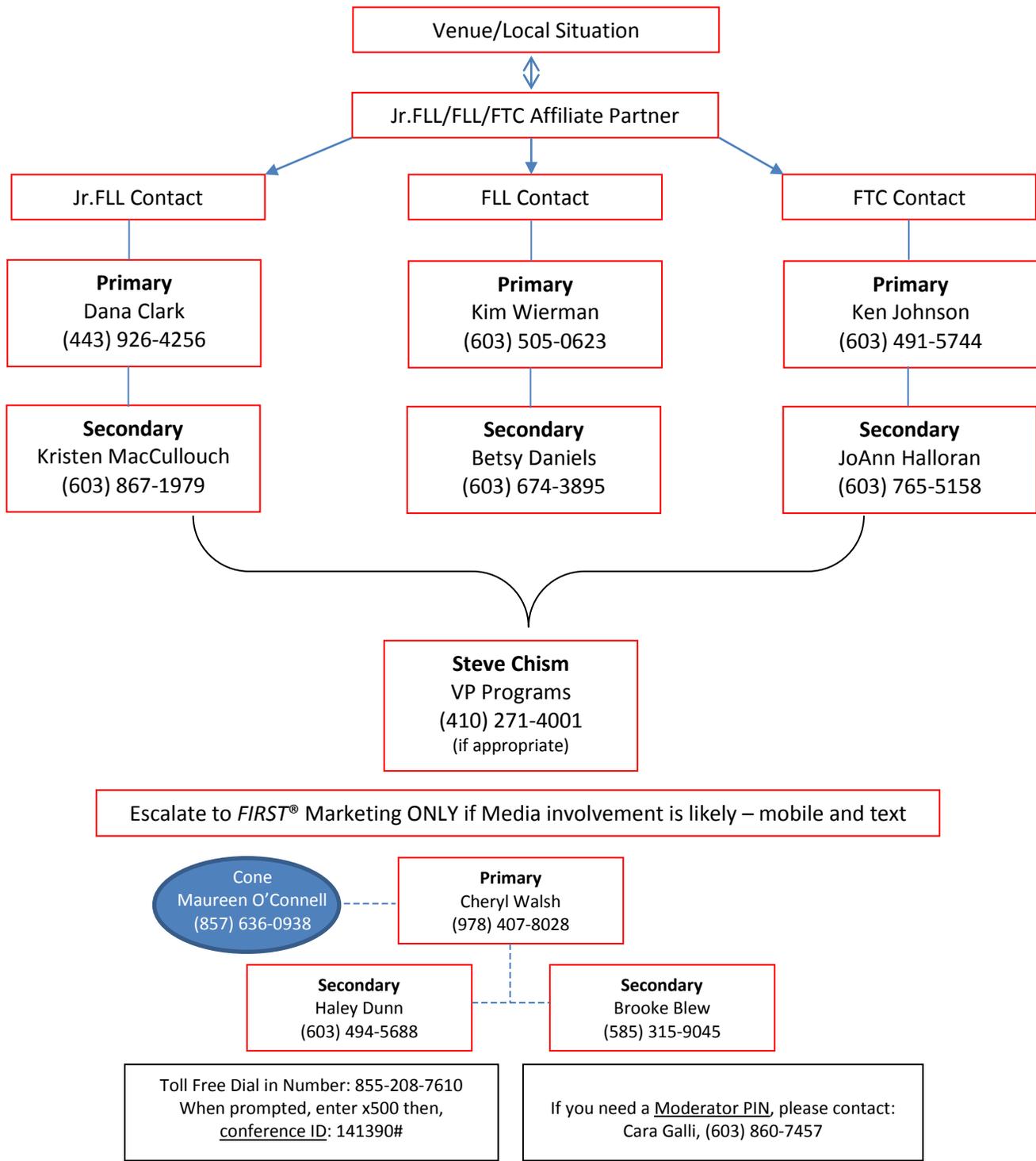
CRISIS COMMUNICATION

NOTIFICATION AND RESPONSE PROTOCOL 2015/2016

Table of Contents:

CRISIS COMMUNICATION TELEPHONE TREE	Page 2
INTRODUCTION	Page 3
"TRIGGERS" FOR NOTIFICATION	Page 4
NOTIFICATION PROTOCOL: WHO SHOULD NOTIFY AND HOW?	Page 5-9
ADDENDUM A: SPOKESPERSON RESPONSIBILITIES	Page 10
ADDENDUM B: CRISIS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CONTACT INFORMATION	Page 11
ADDENDUM C: POLICY & PROCEDURE FACT SHEETS	Page 12-13
ADDENDUM D: MEDIA MANAGEMENT TIPSHEETS	Page 14-16
ADDENDUM E: AUDIENCES TO CONSIDER	Page 17
NOTES	Page 18

Jr.FLL®/FLL®/FTC® CRISIS COMMUNICATION/PR TELEPHONE TREE



2. INTRODUCTION

What is the purpose of this annually updated document?

This protocol defines roles and responsibilities for communication in a crisis, and should be used to prepare supporting materials to help participants in *FIRST*[®] events carry out their roles.

Why do we need it?

To protect the *FIRST* reputation, the *FIRST* “brand” and help anticipate and manage communication in a crisis.

What is a crisis?

This protocol defines a crisis as a serious situation or incident that could put the public reputation of *FIRST* in jeopardy.

How can participants help?

1. Serve as “eyes and ears” at *FIRST* events, including those where no *FIRST* official is present.
2. Identify and communicate risks before they become public so crises can be prevented.
3. Support responsible communication to the public in the event of a crisis.

3. "TRIGGERS" FOR NOTIFICATION

1. Death or serious injury while participating in or traveling to/from a FIRST® event

This would usually involve law enforcement personnel and/or hospital care.

2. Sexual harassment/discrimination/molestation

Racial or age-based harassment/discrimination

In conjunction with *FIRST*-related activities, any situation that could be reported to a lawyer, member of the news media, social services worker, law enforcement, or medical authority using the words, "harassment," "discrimination" or "molestation."

3. Significant illness at an event

A severe or contagious illness that might put the completion of an event in jeopardy, or that requires extraordinary action by medical personnel or that attracts news media attention.

4. Crime at an event

Criminal activity (such as the presence of weapons or drugs, or a physical assault) that might involve law enforcement and could result in a police report.

5. Security threat at an event

Any situation that is causing extraordinary security measures to be taken on-site.

6. Discontinuation of an event due to weather

A severe weather situation that causes the discontinuation of an event after it has started.

Note: *In the event of discontinuation or cancellation of an event, FIRST will post a headline on the homepage at www.usfirst.org as well as the homepage of the Regional Competition Website (if possible). Other notification communications as appropriate (coordinate with designated HQ/Operations staff): e-mail blast to registered teams, announcements on social media outlets, and/or a general announcement on the FIRST phone system at (800) 871-8326 (request via FIRST Operations Group).*

4. NOTIFICATION PROTOCOL: WHO SHOULD NOTIFY AND HOW?

Anyone participating in a *FIRST*[®] event has a notification role to play including:

Legend:

■ Notification Leader

All participants will be notified who the “Notification Leader” is at the beginning of an event by the Regional Director or appropriate Event Management team member. The “Notification Leader” differs depending on the *FIRST* event:

- *FIRST*[®] Tech Challenge (FTC[®]): The Affiliate Partner
- *FIRST*[®] LEGO[®] League (FLL[®]): The Operational Partner
- Junior *FIRST*[®] LEGO[®] League (Jr.FLL[®]): The Operational Partner
- Event Management (Vendor) Representative, *FIRST* Field Operations Staff, or other event ‘lead’

● Volunteer



***FIRST* official at event**

- Local Regional Planning Committee member
 - Local Regional Public Relations manager
 - Local Regional Director
 - *FIRST* Headquarters Representative
-

■ Notification Leader

If you learn of any situation in which notification is required (listed on page 5), you should inform the onsite personnel as quickly as possible and make contact with FIRST® officials as follows:

Junior FIRST® LEGO® League (Jr.FLL®), FIRST® LEGO® League (FLL®) or FIRST® Tech Challenge (FTC®) Events:

- Address any immediate safety issues to stabilize the situation
- Locate and brief a FIRST official (if one is on-site)
- Call FIRST Headquarters Crisis Communications Contact:

	Name	Call/Text	E-mail
■ Junior FIRST LEGO League (Jr.FLL)			
Primary	Dana Clark	(443) 926-4256	dclark@usfirst.org
Secondary	Kristen MacCulloch	(603) 867-1979	kmacculloch@usfirst.org
■ FIRST LEGO League (FLL)			
Primary	Kim Wierman	(603) 505 0623	kwierman@usfirst.org
Secondary	Betsy Daniels	(603) 674-3895	bdaniels@usfirst.org
■ FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC)			
Primary	Ken Johnson	(603) 491-5744	kjohnson@usfirst.org ; kennydean2000@gmail.com
Secondary	JoAnn Halloran	(603) 765-5158	jhalloran@usfirst.org ; joannjll@yahoo.com

Discuss on-site media management and spokesperson needs, including:

- Is the on-site crisis ongoing? If so, for how much longer? Condition of participants?
- Are news media already aware or expected to become aware of the situation?
- To what degree does this situation pose a reputation risk to FIRST?
- Are any immediate media needs best addressed on-site, remotely, or both?
- In this situation, who is best able to speak for FIRST?

Your media management tasks (if no *FIRST*[®] spokesperson is on-site):

- Coordinate the release of incident-specific information with on-site medical, law enforcement, and other officials about what incident-specific information is being released and by whom
- Coordinate with authorities on-site to make decisions about the degree of physical access by the media
- Collect business cards from each news organization on-site and promptly relay this information to *FIRST* Headquarters communications staff:

Name	Call/Text	E-mail
Cheryl Walsh	(978) 407-8028	cwalsh@usfirst.org
Haley Dunn	(603) 494-5688	hdunn@usfirst.org
Brooke Blew	(585) 315-9045	bblew@usfirst.org

- Once you have briefed *FIRST* Headquarters crisis communication contact, provide on-site media with contact information for *FIRST* Headquarters communications staff
- Provide on-site media with written statements and background information approved by *FIRST* Headquarters communications staff
- Continuously update *FIRST* Headquarters Crisis Communications Contact as the situation evolves on-site

● Volunteer

If you see, are told or believe in connection with a *FIRST* event that:

- Someone is injured to the degree where police or hospital authorities are involved
- Someone has been harassed or discriminated against because of their sex, race or age
- Sexual molestation may have taken place
- Students or Volunteers are too sick to continue
- A potentially criminal or threatening situation exists at the event

You should tell:

- The local “Notification Leader,” who is _____ (see page 6)
and can be reached at _____

Remember:

- Facts are rarely certain in the initial stages of a crisis or incident, especially those dealing with why something occurred and who may be to blame
- We ask that you refer any news media requests for information or interviews to the “Notification Leader” or a *FIRST* official, if one is on-site
- If you feel you must comment to news media, we ask that you limit your comments to what you yourself have seen, and avoid assumptions, accusations or speculation



FIRST official at event

If you learn of any situation in which notification is required (listed on page 4), you should coordinate with the event “Notification Leader” to:

- Junior *FIRST*® LEGO® League (Jr.FLL®) *FIRST*® LEGO® League (FLL®) or *FIRST*® Tech Challenge (FTC®) Events:

Call *FIRST* Headquarters Crisis Communications Contact:

	Name	Call/Text	E-mail
■ Junior <i>FIRST</i> LEGO League (Jr.FLL)			
Primary	Dana Clark	(443) 926-4256	dclark@usfirst.org
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■ <i>FIRST</i> Tech Challenge (FTC)			
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Discuss on-site media management and spokesperson needs, including:

- Is the on-site crisis ongoing? If so, for how much longer? Condition of participants?
- Are news media already aware or expected to become aware of the situation?
- To what degree does this situation pose a reputation risk to *FIRST*?
- Are any immediate media needs best addressed on-site, remotely, or both?
- In this situation, who is best able to speak for *FIRST*?
- Besides the news media, what other affected groups/audiences need immediate communication based on this situation, and how do we reach them?

Addendum A: Spokesperson Responsibilities

Coordinate your efforts with Notification Leader at the event and with the *FIRST*® Headquarters Crisis Communications Contact(s):

■ Notification Leader: _____ Phone _____
Headquarters Crisis Communication Contact: _____ Phone _____

Before speaking to media on behalf of *FIRST*, you should:

- Have a statement approved by *FIRST* Headquarters Crisis Communications Contact:

Name	Call/Text	E-mail
Cheryl Walsh	(978) 407-8028	cwalsh@usfirst.org
Haley Dunn	(603) 494-5688	hdunn@usfirst.org
Brooke Blew	(585) 315-9045	bblew@usfirst.org

- Brainstorm anticipated questions and how to handle them with *FIRST* Headquarters Crisis Communications Contact
- Coordinate with on-site law enforcement, medical or other officials to avoid conflict/contradiction of information being released to the media

Media management on-site

- Determine if the media can be restricted to one physical area
- Determine condition of participants/Coaches/Mentors/Volunteers/attendees
- Get business cards/contact info for each news organization on-site and provide this information to *FIRST* Headquarters communications staff
- Provide on-site media with relevant background information approved by *FIRST* Headquarters communications staff
- Provide on-site media with contact information for *FIRST* Headquarters communications staff as back-up to your efforts
- If appropriate given the crisis, hold update briefings on a schedule you communicate to the media in advance
- Keep list of all interviews you conduct, with whom, and at what time

Following media interviews, you should reconnect with *FIRST* Headquarters communications staff to:

- Discuss how to address any challenging questions or issues that arose
- Discuss other audiences that may need to receive direct communication
- Identify other methods of outreach to supplement your spokesperson effort (i.e. Website, phone or email blast, etc.)
- Provide continuous updates as the situation evolves on-site

Addendum B: Crisis Management Committee Contact Information

C = call & text; W = work/office landline

Cheryl Walsh Director, Marketing & Media	C: (978) 407-8028 or W: (603) 666-3906 x460 cwalsh@usfirst.org
Haley Dunn PR & Social Media Specialist	C: (603) 494-5688 or W (603) 666-3906 x494 hdunn@usfirst.org
Brooke Blew Marketing & Channels Program Manager	C: (585) 315-9045 or W: (603) 666-3906 x248 bblew@usfirst.org
Steve Chism Vice President, Programs	C: (410) 271-4001 or W: (603) 666-3906 x428 schism@usfirst.org
CONE Mike Lawrence Executive Vice President and Chief Reputation Officer, Cone Communications	C: (617) 216-9891 or W: (617) 939-8328 mlawrence@conecomm.com
Maureen O'Connell – Account Director	C: (857) 636-0938 or W: (617) 939-8330 moconnell@conecomm.com
Dana Clark Junior <i>FIRST</i> LEGO League Program Manager Jr.FLL issues only	C: (443) 926-4256 W: (603) 666-3906 x443 dclark@usfirst.org
Kim Wierman Reid <i>FIRST</i> LEGO League Director FLL issues only	C: (603) 505-0623 W: (603) 666-3906 x466 kwierman@usfirst.org
Ken Johnson Director <i>FIRST</i> Tech Challenge FTC issues only	C: (603) 491-5744 or W: (603) 666-3906 x447 kjohnson@usfirst.org ; kennydean2000@gmail.com
JoAnn Halloran Program Manager, <i>FIRST</i> Tech Challenge	C: (603) 765-5158W: (603) 666-3906 x456 jhalloran@usfirst.org ; joannjll@yahoo.com
Roseann Stevens Vice President - Planning & Field Operations	C: (603) 703-1126 or W: (603) 666-3906 x403 rstevens@usfirst.org
Dennis Howland Volunteer Resources Manager	C: (603) 496-4685 or W: (603) 666-3906 x437 dhowland@usfirst.org

Addendum C: Policy & Procedure Fact Sheets

FIRST®: POLICIES & PROCEDURES **Volunteer Screening, Training and Management**

NOTE: Currently applies to FIRST® Robotics Competition (FRC®) events, FIRST Championship events, and select Junior FIRST® LEGO® League, FIRST® LEGO® League and FIRST® Tech Challenge Events
(These events are identified on the FIRST website – usfirst.org)

FIRST has a priority to promote safety and security for all participants, Volunteers and Staff believe effective prevention of abuse and harassment begins with awareness.

Applying to Volunteer for FIRST

- Volunteer applicants for local or regional FIRST must be at least 13 years of age. The minimum age to Volunteer at the FIRST Championship is 16 years old. Event Volunteer Coordinators are authorized to raise the minimum age for Volunteer applicants at their discretion.
- Volunteers between the ages of 13 and 18 must have parents approve their online application.
- Volunteer applicants will register online in our Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS).
- Information requested will include, but is not limited to, contact information, team associations, company/organization/association, and event and position preference.
- Volunteer roles are approved and appointed by Event Volunteer Coordinators, their delegates or FIRST staff.
- At FIRST events, Volunteers are required to check in at a central Volunteer registration/check-in location, and present a photo ID, which is to ensure they are who they say they are.

FIRST Volunteer Screening

Screening of Volunteers who work with youth programs is a generally accepted industry standard. For the 2015/2016 season, a confidential screening process will be used for event Volunteers who register in the FIRST Volunteer Information and Matching System (VIMS) and Team Information Management System (TIMS) in the U.S. and Canada. There will be no cost to Volunteers for this screening process. Additionally, all Volunteers are required to undergo FIRST Youth Protection Program training. For more details visit: www.usfirst.org/youth-protection-program.

NOTE: Applicants between the ages of 13 and 17 are not screened.

Upon entering their VIMS or TIMS account for the 2015/2016 season, Volunteers will be required to read and acknowledge the FIRST Terms and Conditions.

Exceptions

- **Volunteers under 18:**

If on-site and unable to present picture ID, or picture ID with a home address, event organizers are advised to use their discretion in determining identification; must obtain a parent/guardian signature on the *FIRST* Consent & Release form.

- **Walk-on Volunteers:**

Must fill out a standard written application form, which is sent to *FIRST* after the event; assigned to a highly visible role and are required to “buddy” with another screened Volunteer at all times. Walk-on Volunteers are required to turn in their Volunteer name badge at the end of their shift.

- **Key Volunteers Positions:**

Some key Volunteer positions are required to sign the Conflict of Interest and Disclosure Statement

- **Volunteer Training:**

Each Volunteer position has a written position description and Volunteer guidelines with safety policies and procedures on transportation, equipment and guarding against abuse. These documents are available to all Volunteers on the *FIRST* website.

Volunteers are strongly encouraged to attend any pre-event training or webinar offered by their event, which includes a safety review, facility tour, and position training by Lead Volunteers.

Each Volunteer receives a brief on-site orientation with health and safety information, including how to obtain first aid, how to report injuries, and how to report incidents involving inappropriate behavior.

Volunteers in leadership positions participate in mandatory *FIRST*-sponsored online trainings and/or conference calls prior to events.

Volunteers are trained to cover both the central and remote areas of the venue, including break rooms and restrooms.

Volunteer Management:

All Volunteers are advised to be assigned age-appropriate tasks, with adequate and competent supervision.

Volunteers are not permitted to be responsible for or bring children under the age of 18, unless they are at least 13 and serving in a Volunteer role at the *FIRST* event.

Volunteers must wear the event t-shirt and name badge at all times for identification purposes.

Volunteers are required to sign a Consent, Release, Hold Harmless, and Authorization to Reproduce Physical likeness form the first time they Volunteer each season.

Selected staff and Volunteers who are managing critical aspects of the event are issued radios to communicate and assist in managing safety threats, injuries or incidents promptly.

All Volunteers are advised of the *FIRST* Code of Conduct and the availability of the Medical or Non-Medical Incident Report forms to be used in reporting activities contrary to this Code. These documents are located on the *FIRST* website or from the local event Volunteer Coordinator.

Addendum D: Media Management Tipsheets

MEDIA MANAGEMENT TIPSHEET FOR "NOTIFICATION LEADERS" AT ALL FIRST® EVENTS

Critical things to understand in a crisis:

- A crisis is a public event
- The media must hear from *FIRST*® quickly
- Information-wise, you have no right to privacy
- Public perception: silence=guilt; absence=incompetence
- Perception quickly looks like reality
- The media will often learn facts before you do
- In an evolving crisis situation, news coverage may be continuous
- Local media coverage can appear nationally

Media "Personality" in a Crisis:

- See themselves as "defender of the public trust"
- Immediately looking to place blame
- More competitive than usual
- Hungry for information and will talk to almost anybody
- They go where they want unless you manage the location

Things *FIRST* May Need to Provide to Media On-Site:

- Official information on what is happening
- Background information on *FIRST* and its policies and procedures
- Something relevant to photograph/videotape
- Frequent, scheduled updates
- Access to a spokesperson (case-by-case)

Your Responsibilities as a Crisis "Notification Leader:"

- Recognize a crisis situation and make notification
- Act "eyes and ears" for *FIRST* regarding news media on-site
- Act as conduit for *FIRST* to get approved information to media on-site

"Locked and Loaded:" Communication Tools to Have Ready at Events:

- This Media Management Tipsheet
- Cell phone, charger
- Landline backup with known phone number
- Access to PC/laptop, Internet and a printer
- Assistance from another colleague identified "in the wings"
- Crisis Communication Document
- Crisis Communication Team Telephone Tree (pg. 2)

MEDIA MANAGEMENT TIPSHEET

FOR “CRISIS SPOKESPEOPLE” AT FIRST® EVENTS

(See also, “Media Management Tipsheet for ‘Notification Leaders’ at FIRST Events”)

PREPARING FOR A CRISIS INTERVIEW:

- Get FIRST® Headquarters-approved position and key messages out to media quickly; the longer the delay, the more speculation fills the gap. Contact Headquarters Crisis Communications Cheryl Walsh (978) 407-8028 (call/text) or cwalsh@usfirst.org
- Make sure you are comfortable with the impact the messages will have on the legacy of FIRST
- Anticipate key questions and plan to answer them before they’re asked

“DOs” FOR CONDUCTING A CRISIS INTERVIEW:

- Stand rather than sit
- Deliver key messages early and often
- Always start with a prepared statement; memorized if possible
- Show empathy for all victims of the crisis
- “Look ‘em in the eye” when delivering messages containing empathy or responsibility
- Be direct and honest
- Take responsibility — but not necessarily blame
- Explain what FIRST is doing right now to help
- Explain what FIRST will do to fully understand what happened and how it will apply this information in the future
- Express gratitude for the assistance of on-site emergency personnel
- End the interview after a few questions or when the questions become repetitive

“DON’Ts” FOR CONDUCTING A CRISIS INTERVIEW:

- Speculate
- Act defensive or angry
- Say, “No comment” – say *why* you can’t comment (e.g. We are working with local law enforcement and/or they have access to that information)
- Identify a cause or assign blame (unless a factually-certain cause is approved in advance by FIRST Headquarters)
- Identify people injured or killed until next of kin have been notified (or if the victim is a minor child)
- Identify people under 16 years old who have been arrested or charged with a crime
- Go “off the record”

BEST TIMES/PLACES FOR YOU TO DELIVER KEY MESSAGES IN A CRISIS INTERVIEW:

- After small-talk, before the interview begins (“*You must be very busy....*”)
- In an opening statement (“*I have three key points to make...*”)
- When responding to an open-ended question (“*Tell me what happened...*”)
- When there is a pause in the interview
- As a final summary (“*Anything else I should know?*”)

A CRISIS IS A BRANDING OPPORTUNITY:

- A chance for *FIRST* to demonstrate integrity, responsibility, concern and compassion.

“LOCKED AND LOADED:” COMMUNICATION TOOLS ON-SITE:

- This Media Management Tipsheet
- Cell phone, charger
- Landline backup with known phone number
- Access to PC/laptop, Internet and a printer
- Assistance from another colleague “in the wings”
- Social Media consideration – Consult Haley Dunn (603) 494-5688, hdunn@usfirst.org
- Crisis Document and Telephone Tree (pg. 2)

Addendum E: Audiences to Consider

Audiences needing communication from *FIRST*® will vary from situation to situation. Communication priorities and methods will be determined by the Crisis Management Committee.

Key audiences to consider are:

- Emergency Personnel
- The News Media (print, TV, radio, online)
- Venue Owners/Management
- Parents of *FIRST* students
 - ...at the events
 - ...system-wide
- Other participants at the event
 - School Officials
 - ...at schools attended by event participants
 - ...at schools involved with *FIRST* system-wide
- Local government officials
- Invited VIPs
- Sponsors
- Partner Organizations (*FIRST* Alliances)
- *FIRST* Internal Staff
- *FIRST* Volunteers
- Social Media audiences – Consult Haley Dunn (603) 494-5688 hdunn@usfirst.org
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - Blogs
 - Other...

