



a Theory of Crisis Management



If government leaders engage in a selected set of crisis management tasks, they will initiate a response that is likely to minimize the effects of a large-scale crisis or disaster

Tasks

Detection and Preparation

Sense making

Coordination and Critical decision-making

Meaning making

Working together to prepare for known and unknown threats

Organizing to collect, interpret and disseminate critical information that enables a shared understanding of an unfolding crisis

Identifying critical decisions that must be made at the strategic level; enabling collaboration between all parties

Formulating and communicating a convincing and enabling narrative that explains what has happened

Expectations, evaluative questions, areas of explanation and challenges

Governments at all levels must take the threat seriously and act as best they can to prepare and protect the population

Governments at all levels should cooperate to share and analyze information

Governments at all levels should work together to ensure that critical tasks are being performed by those who are best placed to perform them

Governments at all levels should cooperate to formulate and communicate a shared frame to survivors and the general public

3 evaluative questions to assess how well government organizations handled the preresponse phase:

Did authorities willfully ignore clear and unambiguous signals of an impending disaster?

Did they take adequate preparatory measures in light of what could reasonably have been foreseen or expected?

Did they warn people in a timely fashion and try to move them out of harm's way?

Why did the authorities not act adequately to collect, verify, share, and appreciate critical information?

Limited capacity to collect and verify information

A breakdown in the communication chain

A failure of collective imagination

The coordination challenge

The organizational structure does not match the scale of the disaster

Bureau-politism; when bureaucratic tensions begin to hamper collaboration

A shifting problem definition

Critical challenges

Managing expectations

To have key actors "sing from the same sheet"