Financial Crisis Communications Plan: How to Keep Clients Calm and Confident When the Markets Go Crazy
**Strategy Brief:**

Financial Crisis Communications Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy Overview</th>
<th>Create a quick-start crisis communications plan designed to reassure clients and impress prospects in event of market disruptions, natural disasters, economic breakdowns, political failures, etc.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Entire client list, prospect list, COIs, media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Objectives        | • Contain emotional responses  
• Reassure clients  
• Impress prospects  
• Neutralize media influence  
• Identify investment opportunities  
• Look more professional & proactive than clients’ other advisors  
• Become the go-to resource for clients, prospects, COIs, media  
• Extend outreach to clients, prospects, COIs, and media  
• Enhance responsiveness in times of trouble |
| Resources         | • Strategy Brief  
• Schedule & Checklist  
• Phone scripts:  
  o Initial client call  
  o Robo call  
  o Voicemail message  
  o Receptionist script  
  o Prospect script  
• Emails  
  o Handholder email  
  o Reassurance email  
  o Email blasts |
| Time Frame        | Whenever crisis criteria is reached |
| Compliance        | Expedited |
| Action Plan       | 1. Define crisis triggers  
2. Assign team members & roles  
3. Pull crisis list  
4. Develop key messages  
5. Assemble communication material  
6. Select activities & timing  
7. Manage information flow  
8. Determine non client communications  
9. Prepare for next crisis  
10. Take care of yourself & your team |
## Financial Crisis Communications Plan
### Schedule & Checklist

- **Outline What Triggers a Crisis**
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  - 4.
  - 5.

- **Identify Team Members & Their Responsibilities**
  - 1. **Lead Advisor**:
    - Duties:
  - 1. **2nd Lead Advisor**:
    - Duties:
  - 2. **Research/Writing**:
    - Duties:
  - 3. **Customer Relationship Manager**:
    - Duties:
  - 4. **Media Contact**:
    - Duties:
  - 5. **Admin**:
    - Duties:

- **Pull Crisis List**
  - Segment by assets
  - Segment by "Freak Factor"
  - All clients, prospects, COIs
  - Ex clients, prospects
  - Media

- **Develop Key Messages**
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
## Assemble Communication Material

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Externally prepared:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Principles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Risk management explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment policy statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third party articles &amp; analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical &amp; comparative charts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Market updates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portfolio reviews</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bear market materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internally prepared:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phone scripts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emails</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tweets</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blog Posts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Select Activities & Timing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emails</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Handholding emails</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reassurance emails</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email blasts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attachments</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phones</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial client call script</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voicemail script</td>
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<tr>
<td>Receptionist's script</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Robo calls</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Webinars</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference calls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open house</td>
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<tr>
<td>Townhall meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>One-on-one meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Web site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blog posts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Videos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Manage Information Flow

- Dedicated researcher/writer
- Credible media sources
- Google alerts
- Other alerts
- Expert commentary
- Twitter

## Determine Non Client Communications

- Prospect calls
- Communication activities

## Prepare for the Next Crisis

- Evaluate plan execution
- Outline lessons learned
- Update Crisis Communication Plan
- Revise handholding emails
- Review procedures
- Adjust portfolios
- Host workshop for clients & prospects

## Take Care of Yourself & Your Team

- Focus on healthy habits during crisis
- Carve out time for thought & reflection
- Delegate
- Support team & families
- Reward team for extra effort
Handholder Email Template

Dear [Name]

Perhaps you've been watching the news on (name of situation – "downgrade, Euro"). You may be concerned about what you are seeing and hearing. That's completely natural.

First of all, I want to reassure you that my staff and I are monitoring the situation extensively using a wide variety of resources, including expert analysis that is not always available to the general public or the financial media. As this situation develops, I will keep you up-to-date on what these experts are saying.

Some perspective on (situation)

Here's what we know so far. [Insert a short synopsis or excerpted news item of the situation to date. Use bullet points for brevity and succinctness.]

What you should do now

It is very natural to want to do something when this kind of news grips the markets. However, making decisions under emotional duress can be disastrous for meeting your long-term goals. Warren Buffett rarely jumps in and out of investments based on the news. We shouldn't either. As Buffett says, "Look at market fluctuations as your friend rather than your enemy; profit from folly rather than participate in it."

You and I chose your investments and constructed your portfolio to weather these kinds of market storms. One of our core principles is: "[insert applicable core principle]." This especially applies today. If you would like to re-read our Core Principles and our approach to managing risk, I've attached them here.

My staff and I will be monitoring this situation very, very closely, and will inform you immediately of any developments that are material to your investment goals. We will be sending you regular updates by email and the phone as events develop. And we are happy to send updates to friends and family if you believe they would benefit.
Of course, if you have any questions or would just like to talk, please feel free to call or email us any time. We are here for you all day and late into the night.

(Secondary contact): (email address)
(Secondary contact): (email address)
(Primary contact): (email address)

Sincerely,

[Advisor Name]
[Advisor Contact Information]
Financial Crisis Phone Scripts

Phone Script: First Crisis Call

Hi, this is (name). How are you? …

I know this (situation) has the markets spooked, but I wanted to call and reassure you that your portfolio is handling it pretty well so far. We made a good choice in going with _______.

How are you feeling about all this? Can I answer any questions for you?

I want you to know I will be sending you email updates as developments arise. I want you to have the entire picture – something the financial media doesn't always provide. And I know you might have friends and family that are concerned about this. While I usually don't make my updates available to non clients, I'd be happy to break policy if you think they could help…

OK. Contact me any time. I'm here to answer questions, talk about the market, and if you think we need to meet, I'll be happy to go over your portfolio with you.

Phone Script: Initial Robo Call

Hi, this is (name).

I just wanted to give you a quick call to reassure you that although the markets are in flux right now, we are watching the situation carefully.

I will be sending you email updates with expert commentary that puts this development in perspective.

Please rest reassured that we built your portfolio to weather just these kinds of storms.

If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with me by phone at ____ or by email at ____.

Otherwise, I will be talking to you in the next few days or as things develop.
**Phone Script: Voice Mail Message**

Hi, this is (name). I wanted to touch base with you during this crazy market. You'll be happy to know that your portfolio is handling it pretty well so far.

I am sending out emails and other updates as the situation progresses, so look for those in your inbox. And if you have any questions or just want to talk, please give me a call. I'm here to answer any concerns you might have. My number is … Or my e-mail is…

Let's talk soon.

**Phone Script: Prospect Call**

Hi, this is (name). I wanted to call to see how you are doing during this market. The last time we talked you were concerned about __________. Has anything changed?

Well, if it would help, I am putting out a series of updates on the markets with some expert commentary that can help us put this volatility in perspective. Usually, I just send these updates to clients, but if you'd like, I'd be happy to include you on the list.

Also, if you're interested, we could conduct a risk appraisal on your current portfolio and see where you might be more exposed. As you can imagine, I'm swamped this week, but I may have some time next week. Would you like to get together and talk?

[If no] I understand. Well, then you might be interested in a workshop I will be holding after things settle down to review what happened and how investors should approach what I think is – and will continue to be – a very volatile market. I haven't set a time yet – it depends on how all this plays out, but if you're interested, I'll be sure to send you an invitation.

Terrific. Well, take care, and if there is anything I can do to help – any questions I can answer for you – please don't hesitate to call. Here is my direct number: _______.

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Phone Script: Receptionist's Script (Incoming Calls)

Hi, (name). I'm sorry, (lead advisor name) is on the phone right now, but I know she wants to talk to you. Is this about the market? Is it urgent? Can she call you back within the hour? Or is there anything (2nd Lead) can help you with? I will give her the message right away. Where can you be reached? Thank you.