

Tripwire Security Solutions, LLC

**POST-COVID CRISIS MANAGEMENT:**

Greetings to all of you who have been doing everything you can to protect and keep safe you, your business, and the people around you. I'm sure dealing with a pandemic was the last thing on your mind when being vigilant about the safety and security of your world. The questions that I think about are, "What has this changed?" and "How has this changed you?"

American history is littered with, Incidents or events that have caused changes in both laws and behavior. How will the Coronavirus Pandemic impact the way we as Americans assess risk, manage a crisis, and establish preparedness. Will Crisis Management become a priority in business plans? Will Security Management become a discipline equal to other management practices?

This Coronavirus pandemic provided a frightening exposure to how quickly and how much the private sector became dependent upon the respective state, local, and even federal governments. The lack of preparedness on the part of businesses and schools was quickly exposed and the lack of consequence management capability highlighted. It is clear that the preparedness mentality will need to change. We will most assuredly hear the drum beat of “never again” that we hear after a violent event at a school or business.

Establishing a culture of security is a critical piece for Crisis Management. Managing a crisis, or a potential crisis requires input and awareness of all with a stake in an adverse action to a business. If the culture of security does not exist, behaviors that could be indicators of an impending crisis will be missed. In the wake of this pandemic, will businesses become more aware of the day to day health of employees? The idea of mandating sick days is foreign to U.S. businesses. Awards are given to employees that never miss a workday due to sickness. Is that because they never get sick or is it because they come to work even when they are sick? Will this change?

The parameters of keeping employees safe and secure during a health crisis vary from business to business. Companies that have employees on the road all day, such as service repair or delivery services, will address employee health differently than an accounting firm or law firm that has a pool of employees spending eight to ten hours or more a day in close quarters. However, keeping them safe will necessarily become a priority. Crisis Management and Emergency Preparedness will inevitably become part of the company culture. New policies and procedures will need to be established or businesses will face internal criticism by employees that don’t feel safe. At schools and universities, instead of the concern of guns on campus, it has become masks on campus. Instead of worrying about unprofessional behavior, a business will be focused on sneezing and coughing employees.

What will your response plan be for the coming storm of your employee’s newest concerns relative to a killer virus in addition to the threat of a violent act against your employees? Who will take the lead within your office to ensure all safety and security measures are established and an appropriate response is designed. The COVID epidemic has demonstrated the need for businesses to be prepared for a significant interruption of business, not just a day or two but a potential business ending interruption.

Going forward, having an employee or employees who understand Crisis Management, Emergency Preparedness, and Contingency Planning will be a must. Having a detailed Incident Response Plan and having a partner who understands Incident Command and the National Incident Management System (NIMS) will provide for a holistic and valuable risk mitigation strategy.

COVID has changed how we do business. It is time for business to change how it manages crises.