

RiskSmart™ Assessment Tool - Instructions and Scoring

Instructions

To use the CDC RiskSmart™ Risk Assessment Tool, go to the following Internet site:

<https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=146609456144>

The tool can only be scored by using the on-line version. This paper version is for information purposes only.

To correctly use the Risk Assessment Tool, open the tool online and as quickly as possible answer the 34 questions based on what you know about the situation. Do not over-think your answers.

The Risk Assessment Tool helps in assessing the severity of the risk when it begins to unfold. What strategies you will use to mitigate and communicate about the risk depends on a number of variables; therefore, this tool encourages you to work with professionals and your leadership in crafting your strategy for response.

Scoring

150-300 points—Action.

Individual: Seek immediate consultation with leadership and communication professionals to help inform their decision-making related to an issue if it has not yet occurred or mitigate an issue that has occurred. Do not delay.

Organization: Immediate action is required by the organization to mitigate/respond to the credibility risk. Delay will likely increase the reputational damage and extend the time needed to recover from the event. The organization's risk management/crisis plan should be activated.

76-149 points—Action and monitoring.

Individual: Seek consultation from communication and policy experts in the organization to determine what further action may be required now or in the future. A SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis could be helpful in further determining next steps.

Organization: The issue requires careful consideration before steps are taken. It may be helpful to engage your communication and policy professionals in determining whether the issue has the potential to become more risky and if the benefits of the actions outweigh the risks. A decision must be made regarding the level of acceptable risk for the organization and whether the action that has been taken or is about to be taken corresponds with the organization's mission and core values. A SWOT analysis will be helpful in determining proper courses of action.

0-75 points—Monitoring

Individual: Likely the issue may not generate a strong, immediate credibility threat to the organization. However, conducting the assessment allows decision makers to look for potential stakeholders who could be concerned by these actions. Also, remember that the environment is dynamic and, therefore, what may seem reasonable today could change as events surrounding the decision/action change. It's useful to periodically conduct the risk assessment as part of the normal course of decision making. When in doubt, seek additional information and consider other points of view.

RiskSmart™ Assessment Tool - Questions

Answer choices:

Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Moderately Disagree; Moderately Agree; Agree; Strongly Agree

Act (what may/did happen?)

- Q1 - Organization is directly responsible for causing death or serious injury by action or inaction?
- Q2 - The act is perceived as deliberate and harmful?
- Q3 - The act is perceived to have been done to entities without their consent or outside their control?
- Q4 - The majority of U.S. citizens (or state, community) will feel somehow victimized by the act?
- Q5 - The act constitutes a repeated mistake by the organization easily recalled by the public?
- Q6 - The act is/perceived by most as immoral?
- Q7 - The act is a breach of ethics or widely accepted values?
- Q8 - The act is illegal (misdemeanor/felony)?
- Q9 - The act did or could cause serious financial harm?
- Q10 - The act has strong political attributes tied to it?

Scene (background situation/environment)

- Q11 - The public and/or media perceive the event as the "first," "worst," or "biggest."
- Q12 - The act has/will seriously damage partner relationships?
- Q13 - The event has widespread national and international scope (or wide scope for workforce)?
- Q14 - The issue relates to a current culturally popular subject?
- Q15 - The act follows in a recent trend of similar acts by others or by the organization?

Agent (role players)

- Q16 - A well-known person (celebrity), product, service, or industry is involved?
- Q17 - Leadership is directly related to the issue?
- Q18 - Organization is the primary/sole responsible party for mitigation?
- Q19 - Organization is the primary/sole responsible party for perceived harm/problem?
- Q20 - The aggrieved are traditional loyal partners and supporters?
- Q21 - The aggrieved is a person or population that has been ill-treated by government/society in the past (for example: race, ethnicity, socio-economic class, sex, or sexual orientation)?
- Q22 - The aggrieved represent children, infants or vulnerable?
- Q23 - The aggrieved or their representatives can be expected to seek compensation?
- Q24 - The aggrieved have oversight for the organization?
- Q25 - The aggrieved represent a substantial number of internal stakeholders?

Agency (by what means do they act?)

- Q26 - The aggrieved has legal standing for recourse?
- Q27 - The aggrieved has/could have strong national media support?
- Q28 - The aggrieved has invoked whistleblower protection?
- Q29 - The aggrieved has made a case against the organization via widespread electronic/social media?

Purpose (why do they act? what do they want?)

- Q30 - The aggrieved wants substantial financial compensation from the organization?
- Q31 - The aggrieved wants a public apology from the organization?
- Q32 - The aggrieved wants a major change in policy inside the organization's control?
- Q33 - The aggrieved wants publicity and notoriety?
- Q34 - The aggrieved wants to embarrass or disrupt the organization?