Crisis Team Leadership Using ISO 22361 Guidelines Course

9 – 13 August 2027
Amsterdam (Netherlands)

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Crisis Team Leadership Using ISO 22361 Guidelines Course

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Crisis Team Leadership Using ISO 22361 Guidelines is a 1-week practitioner course for people who convene, chair or support the group that takes strategic decisions when a disruption threatens the organization. It follows the ISO 22361 guidance on capability, crisis leadership, decision-making and communication, and you take back a Crisis Cell Activation Playbook for your own organization. Mercury Training Center delivers this ISO 22361 crisis team course.

About This Course

When a serious disruption hits, many organizations gather senior people with no agreed roles, no decision rhythm and no single voice outward. This course answers that gap. You should already hold a role in incident response, continuity or risk. You practice in simulated decision rooms, rotating roles and reviewing each round.

Who It Is For

- Executives who chair or join the strategic decision group during a disruption.
- Business continuity and resilience leads who design and maintain the response capability.
- Risk, security and emergency coordinators who escalate incidents and brief decision-makers.
- Communication and stakeholder leads who speak for the organization when events go public.

This course is not for readers who want personal coping techniques for everyday work pressure; a personal resilience course suits them better. It also does not suit first responders who need site-level emergency procedures; an operational emergency response course fits them better.

Competencies You Will Build

- Capability Design: you set out the structures, roles and resources a decision group needs before it is ever called.
- Activation and Escalation: you decide when an incident becomes a crisis and who is called in.
- Chairing the Decision Room: you run a session that keeps the group on strategic issues, not operational detail.
- Dilemma Handling: you name competing options, avoid decision avoidance and record the reasoning.
- Stakeholder Messaging: you approve holding statements and updates that stay consistent across audiences.
- Post-Event Learning: you run debriefs that turn findings into changes in the capability.

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What You Will Be Able to Do

By the end of the course you will be able to:

- Given an organization chart and its risk register, define the membership, deputies and support roles of a strategic decision cell.
- Using the ISO 22361 principles, assess the current crisis capability and list the gaps in structure, culture and people.
- From an escalating scenario, set activation triggers and the first-hour agenda for the decision cell.
- Given a strategic dilemma with incomplete information, frame the options, choose one and log the rationale.
- Using a message map, draft a holding statement and the first internal update for staff.
- From a simulation debrief, write improvement actions with owners for the next exercise cycle.

Course Content

Day 1: ISO 22361 Foundations and Capability

- ISO 22361 Scope, Core Concepts and Principles for Organizations of Any Size
- Incident, Emergency and Crisis Distinctions Used to Set Escalation Thresholds
- Capability Elements: Structures, Culture and People Applied to a Self-Assessment
- Governance and Accountability Charter for the Strategic Decision Group
- Links Between Crisis Capability, Business Continuity and Risk Registers

Day 2: Structuring and Activating the Decision Cell

- Decision Cell Composition, Deputies and Support Roles for Senior Leaders
- Activation Triggers and Call-Out Cascades for Out-of-Hours Events
- Situation Room Set-Up, Information Boards and Logkeeping Templates
- Battle Rhythm: Meeting Cycles and Standing Agenda for the First Day
- Competence Profiles and Role Cards for Each Decision Cell Member

Day 3: Crisis Leadership and Strategic Decision-Making

- Crisis Leadership Behaviors Under Uncertainty and Personal Composure Under Load
- Personality Styles and How Each Responds to Sustained Pressure in the Room
- Strategic Decision-Making Steps and Why Crisis Decisions Are Difficult
- Dilemma Framing and Decision Avoidance Checks for the Chair
- Decision Log Format Linking Choices, Rationale and Review Points

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Day 4: Crisis Communication and Stakeholders

- Stakeholder Mapping for Staff, Customers, Authorities and Media
- Message Maps and Holding Statements for the First Public Response
- Spokesperson Preparation and Media Interview Rehearsal
- Internal Updates and Rumor Control Through Staff Channels
- Social Media Monitoring and Escalation of Emerging Narratives

Day 5: Decision Room Simulation Practice

- Exercise: Activating the Day 2 Decision Cell in a Live Scenario
- Exercise: Resolving a Day 3 Dilemma with the Decision Log
- Exercise: Issuing Day 4 Holding Statements Under Time Limits
- Structured Debrief and Lessons Capture Under ISO 22361 Training and Learning Guidance
- Completing the Crisis Cell Activation Playbook for Your Organization

Case Studies and Exercises

The items below are suggested activities.

- Case study: a ransomware attack halts billing at a utilities provider; you decide when to activate the decision cell.
- Case study: a product contamination report reaches a food manufacturer; you weigh a recall and log the decision.
- Exercise: a fire closes a hospital wing overnight; you run the first-hour agenda and assign roles.
- Exercise: a fatal accident at a construction site draws media attention; you draft the holding statement and staff update.

What You Take Back

The Crisis Cell Activation Playbook is the document you assemble across the one week for your own organization. In your first month back you review it with the executive sponsor, confirm members and deputies, and schedule a short exercise to test it.

- Decision cell membership, deputies and role cards.
- Activation triggers, call-out cascade and first-hour agenda.
- Decision log and dilemma framing template.
- Message maps and holding statement drafts.

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Quick Answers FAQ

What should you know before an ISO 22361 crisis team leadership course?

You should already take part in incident response, continuity planning or risk work and know how your organization escalates problems. No prior reading of ISO 22361 is needed.

How does ISO 22361 crisis team leadership differ from a general stress and pressure leadership course?

A general course builds your personal composure. This one builds the organization's decision group: who sits in it, when it activates, how it takes strategic decisions and how it speaks to stakeholders, following ISO 22361 guidance.

What kind of crisis management standard is ISO 22361?

ISO 22361 is a set of guidelines. It helps organizations plan, establish, maintain, review and continually improve a strategic crisis management capability, whatever their type, size or complexity.

What do you take back from ISO 22361 crisis team leadership training?

You take back a Crisis Cell Activation Playbook for your own organization, with members and deputies, activation triggers, a first-hour agenda, a decision log and message maps.

For Your Manager

After the course, the team member can set up and chair the group that takes strategic decisions during a serious disruption, frame hard choices and approve consistent messages. They return with a Crisis Cell Activation Playbook for the organization, first used to confirm members and deputies with the executive sponsor and to plan the next exercise.

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