

# The Prepared Leader

Tags: [#crisis-management](#)

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## Dialogue

Where to Start When Inheriting a Team in Crisis

What was your own inner dialogue like in the summer of 2020?

Crises are not one-off events. They happen time and time again. Just as one crisis starts to resolve, another is already taking shape. Unfortunately, human beings are not ideally equipped to rationalize threats like this.

Most of us don't think about crises that way -- but the invitation is that leaders should?

For most of us, crises are predominantly threats. We are inclined to frame them as a danger—to ourselves, our people, our organizations, and our stakeholders. But crises are ambiguous. They are both threats and opportunities. Yet how you navigate a crisis and how you respond to its threats and its opportunities in your decision-making depends very much on the subjective frame you use.

There are three C's of trust:

In “normal” times, the three C's of trust are key. In crisis situations they are critical.

Often leaders react. Sometimes they stop and assess. But trust is the kind of thing people might assume either that have it or not...but can't do that in crisis.

## Communication

You ask leaders -- is communication something you prioritize, especially when you take over leadership of a new team? What does that kind of communication look like?

Key on above -- we tend to downplay risks. Tell it like it is.

## Contract

You ask leaders -- is there a strong sense of contractual obligation or commitment between you and your team or teams? How would you know?

## Competence

Are you confident that you and your team have the knowledge and aptitude to get critical things done? What if you're not sure -- or the answer is no?

## Swift trust -- what is it?

Some things are more straightforward in a crisis. What is clearer?

## High performance meetings

- They are frequent
- Eventually you can't be at all
- People knowing guiding principles is key since you're dealing with both the immediate and building organizational resilience for the long term.

## What have you changed your mind on?

## Reserve

Triple bottom line: people, profit, planet -- and forth is prepared leadership.

## Quotes

Perhaps it's helpful to remember that in jazz, a single note is neither intrinsically right nor wrong. It's the note that comes after it that will determine how coherent the whole piece is. As Miles Davis famously put it: "There are no wrong notes in jazz, just notes in wrong places."

At the end of the day, the final word will still fall to you as a leader to make the critical decisions that will move you and your organization forward, through the crisis and on toward resolution, repair, and rebuilding. To become a Prepared Leader, you should understand that empowering your team to lead is not the same as abdicating responsibility or delegating critical decision-making to others.

## References