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**ANATOMY OF A CRISIS: Crisis communication for project controls**  
**Relevance: Decision and Risk Management**  
**Recommended Theme: Innovations Zone**

***ABSTRACT***

When it comes to crisis planning, it's not a matter of "if" but "when." Communication is central to any crisis plan and will make or break the crisis team's ability to move across issues and disciplines with unity of purpose. Communication is the one area where human factors, the most difficult to predict and control, will always take precedence.

In "Anatomy of a Crisis," 30-year corporate communication veteran Merritt Hamilton Allen breaks down all manner of crises, from large to small. Project professionals will learn where the emotional touchpoints are and how to stay ahead of them; this ensures de-escalation of tension, allowing the crisis team to focus on resolving issues and restoring steady state.

Allen will also provide basics for dealing with hard questions from possibly biased audiences, crucial to maintaining credibility for any project in crisis. She will provide basic guidance on communication ethics. Finally, the presentation will close with guidelines for when to call in expert help – when the crisis is larger than the project team or even the organization can handle.

Attendees can expect to leave the presentation with:

- a clear understanding of the crucial moments to proactively engage stakeholders as a crisis unfolds, based on real-world examples;
- easy-to-remember tips for addressing difficult and even biased questions;
- clear ethical guidance for crisis communication;
- guidelines on when to bring in expert consultants.