



Trauma Intervention Programs of San Diego

WHEN TRAGEDY STRIKES IN THE WORKPLACE

GUIDELINES FOR MANAGERS

1 | REACH OUT TO EMPLOYEES

- Acknowledge the tragedy
- Provide opportunities for togetherness
- Organize a diffusing
- Accept all feelings (don't cheerlead or argue)
- Respect individual differences
- Wander around and ask "How are you?"
- Don't forget all the victims, including family members and those "off-site"

2 | PROTECT EMPLOYEES FROM FURTHER HARM

- Protect from media
- Clean up
- Meet physical needs
- Protect employees from blamers
- Don't overprotect/don't give false reassurance

3 | KEEP EMPLOYEES INFORMED

- Provide information about what has happened; what the company is doing; what the company will do; what the system is doing; and how the family is coping
- Acknowledge any lack of information and explain when information will be available
- Information should be timely, honest, understandable
- Provide regular "briefings"

4 | ORGANIZE CHAOS

- Take time to develop a simple plan
- Ask for help from employees – they want to help
- Delegate tasks according to strengths
- Maintain a normal business routine
- Ask for outside help



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5 | REINFORCE STRENGTHS IN THE WORKPLACE

- Listen for strengths
- Support reminiscing
- Support “saying goodbye” rituals
- Support employee grieving and remembrance activities
- Point out what employees did right
- Provide comforting information about the family
- Thank employees for their help in managing the crisis
- Reinforce “positive thinking” when it comes from employees