

In Times Of Trouble



When I was in the newspaper business, every day involved a crisis or 10.

I clearly remember my earliest workplace crisis. As a new writer fresh out of college, I arrived for my first day on the job just as the veteran reporter who was assigned to mentor me was busy being fired.

Then there was that late election night in 2000 when the downstairs presses were speedily printing the next day's news with the massive "Gore Squeaks In" headline. Ouch!

Or that beautiful Tuesday in September when those same presses were commandeered to print out a hastily produced supplement announcing the horrific events of 9/11. Newspaper people who thrive on adrenaline and chaos were able to communicate, collaborate, and push through with a focused determination that I have rarely seen since.

Crises, big and small, happen. Workplaces aren't immune to them.

My crises may have delayed people from getting their news on time. How healthcare technology management (HTM) professionals handle themselves in an emergency, on the other hand, could mean life or death. They are key cogs in the patient care machine and, as such, must be able to handle themselves in times of acute crisis.

In this month's issue, writer Stephanie Stephens talks to experts in the HTM field about how to avoid and navigate workplace catastrophes.

The cover story delves into ventilator technology, and issues that may arise while helping critically ill patients breathe. Crises can—and do—happen with these complex machines. Knowing the basics, including battery maintenance and data and alarm management, is crucial, and it becomes even more so when the technology is used outside the clinical setting.

Now, if only working through an on-the-job dilemma was as easy as pretending it doesn't exist. Then busy people like us could keep quoting Henry Kissinger when faced with the possibility of one.

"There can't be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full." ■

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