

CGIC | April 2, 2025

Who Does What in a Crisis?

Crisis Playbook & Script

Sample – Unexpected CEO Absence or Departure

When a leadership change is decided, everyone near the leader has an important role in the first few days. How will you be ready? Consider having this information available for the most significant situations for your organization.

Who is called immediately?

Role	Who is calling?	Phone Number	Email
Chair			
Interim CEO or Senior Staff Leader			
Board members			
Staff			
Other (e.g., staff, professional advisors)			

What do you say?

As a member of the _____(board, team) I am calling to notify you that

_____ (name) has _____(resigned, been terminated, fallen seriously ill/injured, passed away)

In the next few days/hours the _____(group or committee) will meet and discuss the approach to this important situation.

You should expect a call/email from _____(CEO, Chair, other) outlining the next steps soon thereafter.

What questions do you have for me at this time?

Frequently asked questions during initial calls

1. What can I do to help?
2. Did you see it coming?
3. How is _____ (Chair, CEO, team, family of the leader) doing?
4. How will we tell _____ (internal/external stakeholder group)?
5. Who will be our interim leader?

Moving into action – Immediate Response Group

	Chair	Committee Chair	Interim CEO or Senior Staff Lead	Others
Meeting/call logistics and notice				
Situation review				
Internal communication – messaging, timing				
External communication – messaging, timing				
Roles for immediate term				
Immediate communication to outgoing leader				
Support to leader and/or their family (where appropriate)				
Support to team				
Other				