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PHONE & VIDEO CALLS

MONOLOG · 5 MIN.

Managing a Crisis Call with Conflicting Instructions · Podcast

The CEO wants immediate communication, legal wants silence — how to steer an English crisis call caught between conflicting instructions.

Listen to the episode +
comprehension test:

<https://www.englisch-lehrer.com/podcasts/managing-a-crisis-call-with-conflicting-instructions>

NAME

DATE

BRICK 1 · LEARN THE KEY PHRASES

● ○ ○

Read the eight phrases with meaning and example. You will hear all of them in the episode.

ENGLISH	DEUTSCH	EXAMPLE
a major outage	ein schwerer (System-)Ausfall	<i>A major outage at the data centre took the shop offline for hours.</i>
conflicting instructions	widersprüchliche Anweisungen	<i>The two directors gave us conflicting instructions about the launch.</i>
a middle path	ein Mittelweg	<i>We found a middle path between full disclosure and total silence.</i>
current status	aktueller Stand	<i>Here is the current status of the recovery work.</i>
to slow down	langsamer werden / Tempo rausnehmen	<i>Slow down and lower your voice when the client is panicking.</i>
to restore service	den Betrieb wiederherstellen	<i>Service was restored by eleven, with no data lost.</i>
to strengthen trust	Vertrauen stärken	<i>Honest crisis communication can strengthen trust in the long run.</i>
to keep your word	sein Wort halten	<i>Call back when you said you would — keep your word, even with bad news.</i>



BRICK 2 · FILL THE GAPS



Complete the missing word from the conversation.

current

actual

actually

present-day

word

promise

cool

distance

- 01 Every thirty minutes I gave the client an update on the _____ status.
- 02 Separate facts from instructions, fix the next update time, and keep _____ — every thirty minutes.

BRICK 3 · TRUE OR FALSE?



Tick one. T = true, F = false.

- 01 The legal director wanted to inform all customers immediately. T ☐ F ☐
- 02 No customer data was lost in the outage. T ☐ F ☐

BRICK 4 · ORDER



Number the steps of the conversation (1–5).

- 01 ☐ Service is restored by eleven, with no data lost
- 02 ☐ Two executives give conflicting instructions
- 03 ☐ He proposes a middle path with updates every thirty minutes
- 04 ☐ The hosting provider reports a major outage
- 05 ☐ Stefan separates the facts from the instructions

BRICK 5 · YOUR VERSION



Write two sentences of your own using phrases from Brick 1.

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.....

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MINI-CHECK – CAN I DO THIS YET?

- ☐ I can announce a delay politely.
- ☐ I can propose an alternative.
- ☐ I can promise written confirmation.

Listened twice and ticked everything? Then you are ready for the real conversation.



Cut-out flashcards

✂ Cut out, fold on the line – English in front, German on the back. Or practise digitally:

<https://www.englisch-lehrer.com/podcasts/managing-a-crisis-call-with-conflicting-instructions>

a major outage

A major outage at the data centre took the shop offline for hours.

ein schwerer (System-)Ausfall

conflicting instructions

The two directors gave us conflicting instructions about the launch.

widersprüchliche Anweisungen

a middle path

We found a middle path between full disclosure and total silence.

ein Mittelweg

current status

Here is the current status of the recovery work.

aktueller Stand

to slow down

Slow down and lower your voice when the client is panicking.

langsamer werden / Tempo rausnehmen

to restore service

Service was restored by eleven, with no data lost.

den Betrieb wiederherstellen

to strengthen trust

Honest crisis communication can strengthen trust in the long run.

Vertrauen stärken

to keep your word

Call back when you said you would — keep your word, even with bad news.

sein Wort halten

Answer key

Check only when you have finished. Every answer comes with the **why**.

BRICK 2 · FILL THE GAPS

01 **current**

False friends: "aktuell" is "current"; "actual" means "tatsächlich". "The current status" is the correct phrase for the present state.

02 **word**

"To keep your word" means to honour your promise — here, the commitment to update every thirty minutes even when there is no news.

BRICK 3 · TRUE OR FALSE?

01 **False**

False — that was the CEO. The legal director said to say nothing until the cause was known.

02 **True**

True — service was restored by eleven and no data was lost.

BRICK 4 · ORDER

- 01 **1.** The hosting provider reports a major outage
- 02 **2.** Two executives give conflicting instructions
- 03 **3.** Stefan separates the facts from the instructions
- 04 **4.** He proposes a middle path with updates every thirty minutes
- 05 **5.** Service is restored by eleven, with no data lost

KEEP PRACTISING LIVE

Want to practise these phrases in a real conversation?

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· Online.

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