



GETTING IT DONE RIGHT

Proven Success Indicators

When it comes to critical communications, just like when flying an aircraft filled with hundreds of passengers, failure is not an option. There is no second chance to get it right. Therefore, when it's imperative that your communications are received, can you be certain your organization will succeed? Exercising and measuring all of the 'moving parts' of a system goes a long way toward reducing this risk. This is where Proven Success Indicators come in.

Proven Success Indicators (PSIs) are tools that help give you a 'baseline' on operational

performance. These indicators are a set of quantifiable metrics used to gauge performance and measure success when it comes to crisis communications. The PSIs follow the tried and true framework - People, Process, and Technology. The three sides of the triangle combine organizational leadership, strategic business planning, and technical project management to create a well-rounded environment to operate in.

People

Your stakeholders' involvement is critical to ensuring that your system

setup and usage are in lockstep with your emergency response protocols and operational processes. Making sure that stakeholders are involved from the beginning also ensures that decisions are made in a timely manner, and that expectations for success can be set and met. Some specific and measurable PSI's might be:

- Have "owners" for each scenario been identified and are they engaged?
- Has an Executive Sponsor been identified and is he/she fully engaged in the processes as they are being developed?

- Have additional key stakeholders been identified and included in the plan and process?

Other PSI's that refer to the people involved might include clearly defining your staff's roles within your emergency framework and measuring your teams' readiness through exercises and drills.

Processes

Organizations should identify and fully define the different emergency communication needs up front in order to clearly understand how and why any systems should be used.

Defining the different types of messages that you may integrate to communicate with your population (i.e. Weather Alerts, Life-Threatening Emergency, On-Call Notification, etc) can assist in developing pre-determined messaging - using Omnilert's Scenarios®. Drills and exercises should be performed regularly, on a pre-determined schedule, for each potential emergency.

- Response plans for each emergency should be thought through and documented including outcome ownership, actions, individual notifications, admins involved, messaging, message recipients, and endpoints.
- Emergency types should be reevaluated regularly to ensure they support current needs, and to identify new scenarios to incorporate.

- Individual endpoints should be tested regularly and as changes occur (hardware changes, admin rights, etc).

Technology

An organization's communication tools should support the needs of the individuals involved and the processes that were designed. Your core system functions should be set up sufficiently to execute previously defined emergencies. Using the appropriate technology to support the size, organizational structure, and messaging types streamlines communications.

- Does your data management process match your needs, capabilities, and size?
- Have system administrator assignments and privileges been set up appropriately and do they map logically and intuitively to the organization's structure and emergency response plans?
- Have you set up the appropriate communication channels based on your needs and the severity and complexity of your emergencies?

PSIs are, quite simply, a series of best practices that are designed to help organizations become more effective in communicating during an emergency or crisis. This is done by proactively determining the likelihood of success when the real need for crisis communications does arrive. PSIs represent the best, most practical way to equip you for success — actually

helping you effectively prepare and execute by evaluating your protocols, processes, and technological capabilities.

For example: One aspect to a successful implementation of a critical communications system is key stakeholder involvement. If properly engaged, stakeholders will define the key types of emergencies the system will activate notification and response (such as weather alerts, life-threatening emergency or on-call notification). This upfront definition can then assist communications personnel in crafting the necessary message templates and scenarios. By accurately defining, documenting, and conveying the situations that may arise, critical communications can be streamlined and made more effective.

PSIs are important because technology alone does not encompass the full spectrum of deploying a successful critical communications program. Be sure to work with your emergency notification provider to ensure that best strategies, tactics, and procedures are being applied to most effectively utilize the communications technology. 🌐