

Emergency Contact Procedures

Any situation breaks down to this equation:

Travelers Reaction Time + Management's Reaction Time + Local Law Enforcement's Reaction Time + Time Zone Difference + Complexity of the Task + Language Barriers + Local Resources. And it could be days before help arrives!

90% of the time the travelers couldn't or decided not to contact their management team:

1. To keep this from happening, the travelers need to make it a priority to call their management group at least twice daily and between stops while traveling.
2. The travelers also need to immediately report any illness, injuries, police or military contact or any other odd events, as these may be indicators that something bad is about to happen.
3. All travelers need to have each other's contact numbers, groups flight numbers, in-country contact numbers, hotel reservations and written instructions on why, how and when to contact the management group. This allows for reporting redundancy; in case the traveler's leader is the one that becomes incapacitated.

9% of the time someone got sick or injured and the travelers are dealing with that:

1. The traveling group needs a solid emergency medical plan and they need locations and maps to all the medical facilities in a 200 mile radius and along the route of travel.
2. Everybody needs a copy of the plans and the traveling group needs to practice using the plans.
3. All the travelers need to be CPR and First Aid trained, designated medics are fine, but everybody needs to know basic CPR and First Aid.
4. Everyone needs to carry a small first aid kit for emergencies.
5. For more advanced teams SOS satellite beacons and text pagers, and satellite phones as cell phone coverage is nearly non-existence outside of the major urban areas.

1% of the time, one or more have been kidnapped or killed and you have a serious crisis:

1. Alert your leadership, management team and contact the Crisis Management company. Go fast as lives and your organization's reputation hang in the balance.
2. Work to contact all other travelers and see how many are in jeopardy.
3. You may have several moving parts; like one kidnapped person, two injured people and several unaccounted or missing people so bring in more qualified help.

A. This is why it is so important to have contingency plans for such problems that are rehearsed by EVERYONE prior to people traveling. (Also any training in escape and evasion

techniques is invaluable to the travelers and to the management team as they will need to understand the recovery process.)

B. If you have other people in the area warn them immediately! The goal is to minimize the risk to the people on the ground.

C. If those people want to come home then get them home. If they want to stay overseas assess the risk as possible they could be your organizations in-country eyes and ears and could coordinate with local law enforcement, the U.S. Consulate, and other entities.

D. Remember a kidnapped person will be aggressively questioned about the locations of other members in their team so they can kidnap them too, so use your evasion plan.

4. Call all the local contact phone numbers and send email's to all the locations the traveling group were supposed to stay or visit:

A. You are inquiring to see if they are still at that location, when they left or if they have heard from them.

B. Also ask for the local police department's phone number and contact them. Be prepared to give them a bunch of information and pictures.

C. Think outside the box, like bus lines, taxi companies, car rental companies, even popular restaurants, and maybe a local private investigator or security firm in case you have to get people out or track people down.

5. Maintain an open line of communication with their families, maybe the families have heard something, you have to keep the families calm and in the loop, figure on one person per family at a minimum:

A. Ask to see if the missing people have used their cellphones, email accounts, prescriptions refills, or satellite phones.

B. Also check any satellite SOS beacons and text messengers, credit cards, debit cards, etc...

C. Call and talk to the last people they called from their cell phone bill and don't forget about calling cards to!

D. The better you care for the families the smoother this process will be. If they need the yard mowed, mow it! Be prepared to help them establish self-sufficiency if they lose their primary income earner.

E. At some point the news media will get involved so it is vitally important to get a professional media relations person in front of the cameras and not some distant relative of the family with their own agenda.