

An illustration with a light purple background featuring three white clouds. At the top, a hand in a dark blue suit sleeve holds a red and white striped life preserver. Below, four hands in green, purple, dark blue, and orange suit sleeves reach up from dark blue and light blue wavy water. The text "Chapter 5: Crisis Management" is centered in the middle.

## **Chapter 5: Crisis Management**

## Visual Hints

Look at the following pictures. Try to match each picture with the relevant action or noun from the box below.

**Landslide**

**Tsunami**

**Flood**

**Tornado**



## What is a Crisis?

Crisis is a change, sudden or *evolving*, which results in a problem that must be addressed immediately. For a business, crisis is anything that causes serious damage to its employees or reputation. It usually has three main characteristics. First, it is the result of sudden disturbing events that harm people in a country, region, area, or an organization. Second, it generally takes place on a short notice. Third, it creates a feeling of fear and *threat* among the individuals.





There are limitless types of crises, but for better analysis, they are traditionally divided into two main types: industrial and natural crises. However, recently terrorist crises are also added to these groupings. Natural crises are created by acts of nature and are generally beyond the control of human beings. Some examples of natural crises include: earthquakes, *Tsunamis*, floods, tornadoes, and landslides. On the contrary, industrial crises are situations in which organized activities are the source of major damage to human life and natural and social environments. Such crises can range from wars and terrorist attacks to *bankruptcy* which happens when an organization fails to pay its debts.

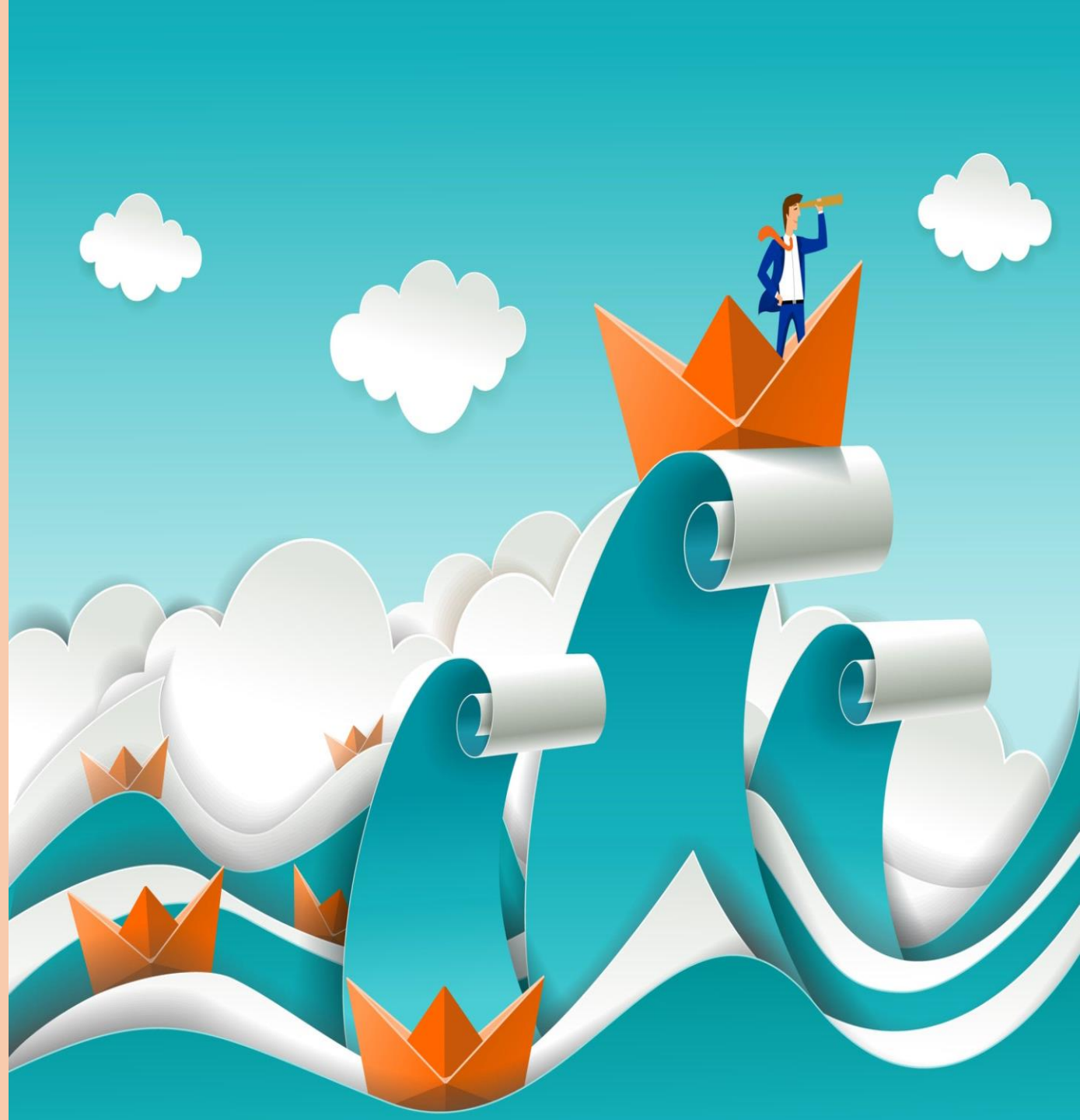


Before they occur, the majority of crises send a set of early warning signals, which announce the possibility that a crisis will take place; these signals are sometimes very weak or hard to detect.



## What is Crisis Management?

Whatever the cause of the crises, it is generally accepted that exact solutions for a crisis cannot be *prescribed*; rather crises should be managed. Crisis management refers to the art of dealing with the negative impacts of unexpected events or situations on people, organizations, and countries in the best possible way. Crisis management approach depends on the crisis. For example, it can take the form of a routine financial control in a company for preventing unlawful activities.





The most important step in crisis management, however, is preparedness. Preparedness stands for developing a center for systematic examination of possible threats, opportunities and future developments, which may create new risks, and the use of certain strategies to come out of crisis conditions and also decision on the future course of action so that potential and developing threats may be known, examined, and *mitigated* as early as possible. Preparation involves creating the crisis response plan, selecting and training the crisis management team, and conducting exercises to test the plan and team.



To be effective, crisis response plans should be flexible, identifying at the local level the number of people who might need emergency support, the number of hospital beds required, and safe evacuation roads in case of natural or terrorist crises. This information needs to be made available to the emergency services and those involved in crisis management.

In what follows, instances of crisis management plans in Iran and Mexico are given:





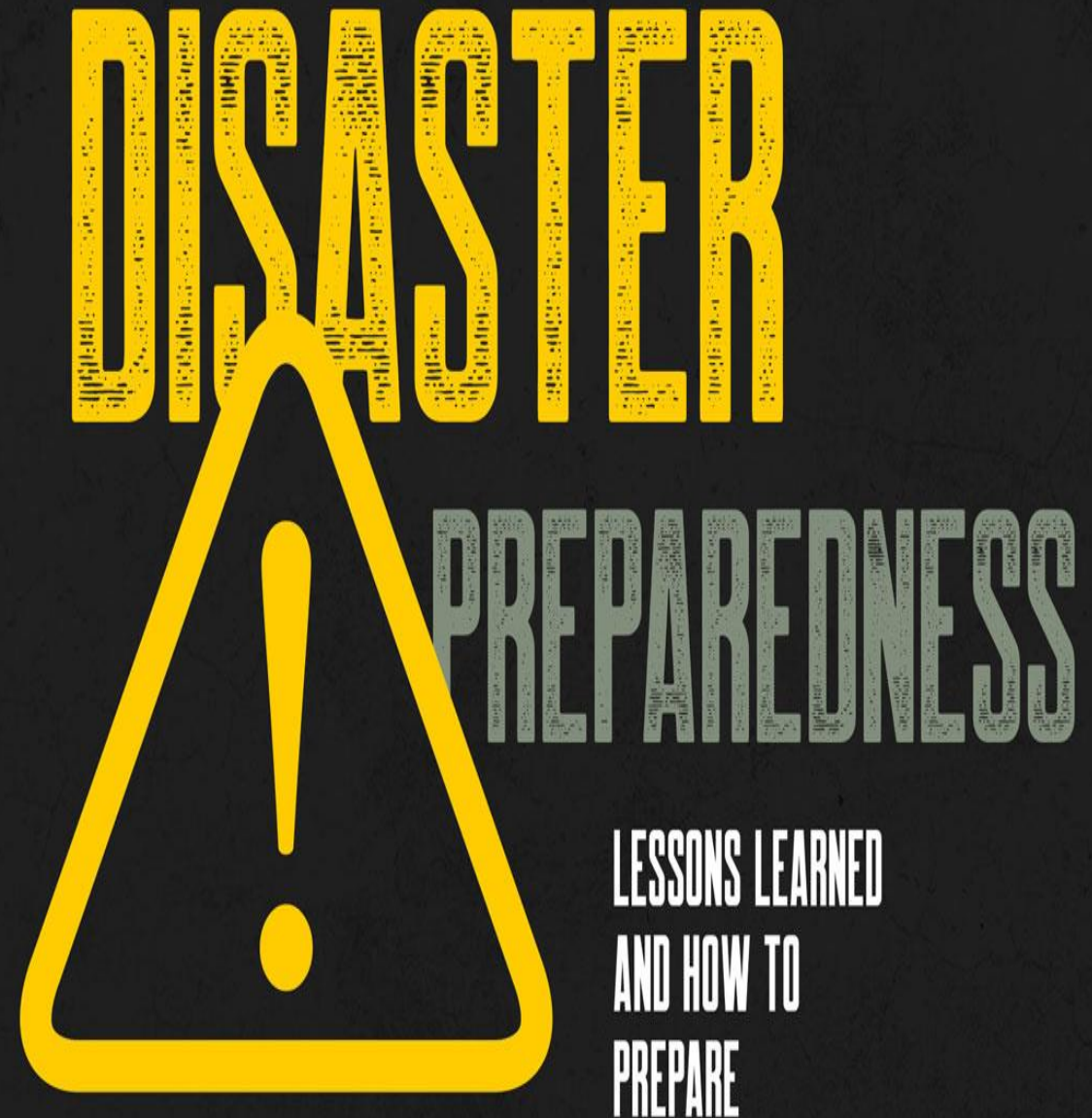
## Tehran Disaster Mitigation and Management Organization

An earthquake in Tehran is considered the most important threat to the Iranian capital as it could *severely* damage the city. For this reason, a special protection program for earthquakes was created by the Ministry of the Interior in 2005 with a committee for earthquake emergency preparedness including all the related agencies. This organization aims to: (1) increase the safety of the city by carrying out careful studies before the earthquake, (2) do necessary actions to increase the effectiveness of Tehran's crisis management system when a crisis happens to reduce the losses, and (3) manage *reconstruction* of the city after the crisis.



## The System for the Analysis and *Visualizing* Risk Scenarios in Mexico (SAVER)

Developed in 2010, this system shows the efforts of the Mexican government to use risk information for *emergency* preparedness. The system collects risk maps and geographical information on weakness of hospitals, schools, public *infrastructure*, and population in one single database. Ministries like the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Communications and Transport and the Ministry of Public Education have provided valuable data and information on their infrastructure in order to feed the system's database. Using this information, the system can create scenarios on potential damages and what populations may be affected based on disasters.



## Conclusion

The capability to manage crises should not be seen as something that can simply be developed when needed. The development of the crisis management capability requires a systematic approach. Organizations, governments, and crisis management committees should actively learn from crises that affected other organizations and/or countries. In addition, recovery from crisis should be seen as an opportunity to restructure the affected area or organization rather than to return to previous normal situation; that is, moving toward a new normality.





### Reading Strategy 5: **PREFIXES**

A prefix is placed at the beginning of a word to modify or change its meaning by adding particular meaning to the word to which they are attached. This is a list of some of the most common prefixes in English. Read the text carefully and find examples for the blanks in the following table.

Prefix	Meaning	Example	Prefix	Meaning	Example
a-, non-	without	anoxic	ex-	out, previous	extract
ab-	away, from	abnormal	hemi-	half	hemisphere
ante-	before	antecedent	hyper	more	hyperactive
anti-, ant-	opposite	antibiotic	un-, in-, im-, il-, ir-, dis-	negation	.....
com-, con-	jointly	converse	inter-	between	international
de-	down	decrease	pre-	before	.....
infra-	beneath	.....	re-	again	.....
un-	negation	unimportant	under-	below	underdeveloped