


# LEADING IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

Lessons from the Chilean Mine Rescue



What can you learn from  
leadership decisions  
made during the mine  
cave-in crisis?



# Decision Makers

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- President of Chile
  - Minister of Mining
  - Trapped Miners

# Leadership Decisions



Golborne's leadership decisions can be divided into three stages:

(1) taking overall responsibility for resolving the crisis

(2) creating and leading a team to solve specific issues in the crisis

(3) choosing among the options for ending the crisis

# Taking overall responsibility for resolving the crisis

- .. (1) Willingness to take responsibility depends on a strong foundation of prior management experience
- .. (2) Being well (or even optimally) positioned in the organization to exercise that responsibility
- .. (3) Confidence that one has the ability to orchestrate the work that will be essential for resolving the crisis (even if the leader is not steeped in the technical issues or functional areas that must be overseen)


# Creating and leading a team to solve specific issues in the crisis

- .. (1) Readiness to recognize the specific limitations of one's own time and expertise provides a platform for building out a top management team.
- .. (2) Identifying all the critical stakeholders — in this case miners, drillers, relatives, subcontractors and government — points to the kinds of individuals who should be included on the team.
- .. (3) Rapid assemblage of the top team and disciplining it to work under stress.
- .. (4) Given the need for both general and technical management, the self-defined role of the crisis manager is to lead the team's decision process but not micromanage its technical considerations.

# Choosing among the options for ending the crisis

- .. (1) Focus on the objective of resolving the crisis serves to energize and motivate the team.
- .. (2) disciplining the team's decisions around achieving that goal can be vital when there is little room for error.
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- .. (3) given the press of time and uncertainties of outcome, creating multiple alternative paths for resolution of the crisis optimizes the likelihood that one will ultimately succeed.
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- .. (4) full and timely disclosure of all vital information serves to help ensure that the crisis leader retains legitimacy in the minds of all stakeholders.





Leadership is the process of bringing a new and generally unwelcome reality to an individual, group or society, and helping them successfully adopt to it.