



## UNIT 4

### Element 3 – Learning Outcome 3

## TRANSCRIPT: CRITICAL SITUATIONS



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## **1 Slide 1**

Welcome to this video-lecture of Live Text Access: Training for real-time intralingual subtitles.

## **2 Slide 2**

My name is Julia Borchert and this is unit 4 Entrepreneurship and service competence - Element 3: Business strategies.

## **3 Slide 3**

This is the learning outcome: The trainee can evaluate a critical situation, identify the problem and make recommendations.

## **4 Slide 4**

We will first look at critical situations and their causes. After that more about different types of crises and how to identify and how to deal with them.

## **5 Slide 5**

Let's get started with critical situations in the job environment in general.

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Statistically, 50 per cent of all projects are subject to failure. When it comes to major projects, the number is even higher: up to 90 per cent of major projects are bound to fail.

In the practical field of live subtitling, it is unlikely that the number of critical situations reaches such a high level; but crises are naturally not impossible.

Their existence may be neglected by freelance workers who have to manage their first own assignments. The good news is, that for most of the situations there are ways out of the deadlock. It simply depends on how well prepared you are.

The most common factors of failure are organisation issues, issues of a technical nature, issues of a personal, for example emotional nature

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The fact that a critical situation could develop in the first place can have various causes.

For example, that the problem and its solution is not recognized as such by the person involved. (e.g. a scraping noise in your headset that does not make you suspicious, or any other minor technical problem)

It also may be due to the fact, that the potential solution is not mastered, for example knowledge or skills are lacking. For example, you don't know all the features and switches of your software for troubleshooting.

Or organizational obstacles cannot be overcome. These are hopefully rare when you are working on your own. But they are not so rare if you depend on your client's resources, or on freelance partners you are working with. But also your own insufficient preparation can bring obstacles. For example, if you have not enough knowledge about the topic you are translating. Imagine working on a conference or the parliament and you don't know special technical terms and how to spell them. The best about this last cause for a critical situation: You can prevent this by preparing yourself well.

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Let's now talk about crises.

## **9 Slide 9**

The words critical and crisis have the same etymology. Critical is the adjective and crisis the noun.

A crisis is any event or period that will lead, or may lead, to an unstable and dangerous situation affecting an individual, group, or all of society. Crises are negative changes in the human or environmental affairs, especially when they occur abruptly, with little or no warning. More loosely, a crisis is a testing time or an emergency.

Characteristics of a crisis are an urgent need for decisions to act, a feeling of threat perceived by the decision-makers, an increase in uncertainty, urgency and time pressure and the feeling that the result will have a formative influence on the future.

In projects, one usually speaks of a crisis when the project can no longer achieve the set goals on its own and needs outside help. That means the project in its existing structures, with the available resources and the existing planning. "From the outside" does not necessarily mean external to the team. Only when you are working as a freelancer on your own, these cases will however be the more relevant ones.

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Objectively unsolvable problems are characterized by the fact that there is simply no solution to a problem. This could be the case, for example, if necessary, documentation for a new process is lost and cannot be reconstructed in the short time available.

In practice, experience shows that project managers complain about objective impossibility more often than it actually occurs, because in a sense it also has something "redeeming" about it. The consequence is usually that the grueling project work ends immediately. That is naturally not your goal. And that also means that it's important not to confuse objective problems with...

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...subjectively not solvable problems: This means that problems would be subject to a solution in principle: Somebody out there would be technically capable to solve the problem. However, right now that solution is not possible for subjective reasons, which means that the problems are on your end, or at least they are in your sphere.

## **12 Slide 12**

How can a crisis be identified?

Early indicators are often visible well in advance of a potential crisis. As a result, it is usually possible to take proactive measures to prevent crisis situations from arising in the first place. On the other hand, often they are not taken sufficiently seriously, and therefore preventive measures are not initiated. Another complicating factor is that each individual indicator may appear unproblematic on its own. It will only become critical in combination with other problems and risks, and eventually lead to a crisis.

For example, if you are preparing for a subtitling job, and you know there will be one or more speakers with strong accents who are bound to be misunderstood, make sure you get a draft of their speech well in advance. If such a draft is not available, try to get information on the topic they will be dealing with, and try to find some background information. If you fail to take these steps, your worst case scenario is not being able to understand a word, and not being able to work around it.

### **13 Slide 13**

So how do you deal with a crisis?

### **14 Slide 14**

Every project manager knows just how stressful it can be to handle damage control in cases of distress. Given the number of challenges that need to be overcome for a successful project crisis management, here are some of the best practices that every project manager and freelancer can benefit from.

### **15 Slide 15**

Assess your risks and have a plan in place.

The first and most important thing is to have a plan in place to help you deal with a crisis. Before you go ahead with the project, you need to make sure that you already assessed your risks and came up with contingency plans for every possible scenario. This prepares you and your team for the worst.

One of the most crucial aspects of your job, apart from your own professional skills, is the technical equipment you will be using. You should always bring your own device, of course – but in most cases you will have to connect that device to your client's infrastructure set up for an event you're about to work for.

The audio signal is – much more than the video signal – the very essence to fulfil any live subtitling task. This should always be part of a check up before the actual job starts. Bring a second headset and check all connections for cable breaks and loose contacts.

If you received drafts or transcripts or any similar material to prepare you for an assignment, and you will need to have them at hand during a live subtitling event, make sure that you don't just save it on your hard drive, but have a flash/USB drive with a backup ready just in case.

## **16 Slide 16**

Be calm and optimistic.

When things don't go as planned, it can be difficult to stay hopeful, but try to be. Doing so will be a lot more helpful and productive than freaking out. In mid-project, you must remain clear-headed so that you can provide yourself and your team with the support and guidance they require.

## **17 Slide 17**

Try to contain the crisis as much as possible.

A practical step that shouldn't be missed is containing the crisis. Maybe some degree of damage is already done. For example, a portion of the job remains without subtitles), but don't let it spread any further. To achieve this, you must be able to think clearly and act quickly and decisively, while also effectively managing all communication channels. Gather factual data regarding the cause and ramifications.

For example, if you are working as a team, and a problem needs your immediate attention, hand the actual respeaking or fast typing part over to a team mate or partner while you focus on the solution of the problem yourself.

## **18 Slide 18**

Identify the cause of the crisis.

After you are successful in preventing the crisis from spreading, and the problem appears to be in control until the job (or a session thereof) is done, you should identify what exactly caused the problem. Only when you know the reason will you be able to take the necessary steps to repair the damage, prevent the problem from coming up again, and get yourself and your team back on track for the remainder of the job and future jobs if this job is now finished.

## **19 Slide 19**

Make sure to keep the team informed.

Even in the face of a crisis, don't neglect your team. You should keep them informed so that they know those in charge are doing everything to handle the situation. This encourages them to keep the business process going as smoothly as possible.

## **20 Slide 20**

Remember to keep everyone updated regularly.

Not just the team mates, but your customer, and maybe other parties, such as technical supporters. Everybody involved in the project should be updated in the best possible way. This keeps everyone calm and in the loop, while preventing rumors from spreading.

## **21 Slide 21**

Revisit the plan as required.

After surviving the crisis, make certain that you have cataloged not only how the crisis began, but the steps which were effective in solving it.

Once you've successfully managed the crisis, don't forget to go back to your plan and make any required changes. If you find that something works better, don't hesitate to update.

After you've survived a few crises, and have carefully kept records of your crisis management, you will not only do a better job at monitoring and preventing, but the next time a crisis appears you will be prepared with the tools to solve it in the most expedient manner possible.

Do not welcome crisis but take advantage of the one benefit it does offer you: experience.

## **22 Slide 22**

Summary.

## **23 Slide 23**

The most common factors of failure and critical situations are organisation issues, issues of a technical nature and issues of a personal, for example emotional nature

## **24 Slide 24**

A critical situation can have various causes. For example that the problem and its solution is not recognized as such by the person involved.

It also may be due to the fact that the potential solution is not mastered, for example knowledge or skills are lacking. Or organizational obstacles cannot be overcome

## **25 Slide 25**

Characteristics of a crisis are an urgent need for decisions to act, a feeling of threat perceived by the decision-makers, an increase in uncertainty, urgency and time pressure and the feeling that the result will have a formative influence on the future.

## **26 Slide 26**

Exercises.

## **27 Slide 27**

The exercises for this video lecture are in the Trainer's Guide and the PowerPoint file.

## **28 Voiceover**

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**Disclaimer:** This project has been co-funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

## 30 Additional metadata<sup>1</sup>

<b>Title or file name of resource</b>	U4_E3_LO3_Critical-situations_TRANSCRIPT.docx
<b>Version</b>	FINAL
<b>Description of resource</b>	Audio transcript for the video lecture about critical situations
<b>Keywords</b>	Project management
<b>Author/Contributor</b>	ZDF Digital, SUBTI-Access
<b>File type</b>	Text
<b>Length (pages, actual length of audio or video)</b>	11 pages
<b>Copyright holder</b>	ZDF Digital, SUBTI-Access
<b>Other related pedagogical assets</b>	PowerPoint Presentation, other videos in the YouTube playlist of the Unit
<b>Related subject or skill area</b>	Unit 4. Entrepreneurship and service competence
<b>Publisher</b>	LiveTextAccess
<b>Format</b>	PDF file
<b>Issued</b>	22 June 2021
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Licence</b>	CC BY-SA 4.0
<b>Accessibility</b>	PDF checked with TingTun
<b>Certified by</b>	ECQA: <a href="http://ecqa.org/">http://ecqa.org/</a>

<sup>1</sup> The scheme used is an adaptation of the format provided by the EU project 2014-1-DE01-KA203-000679