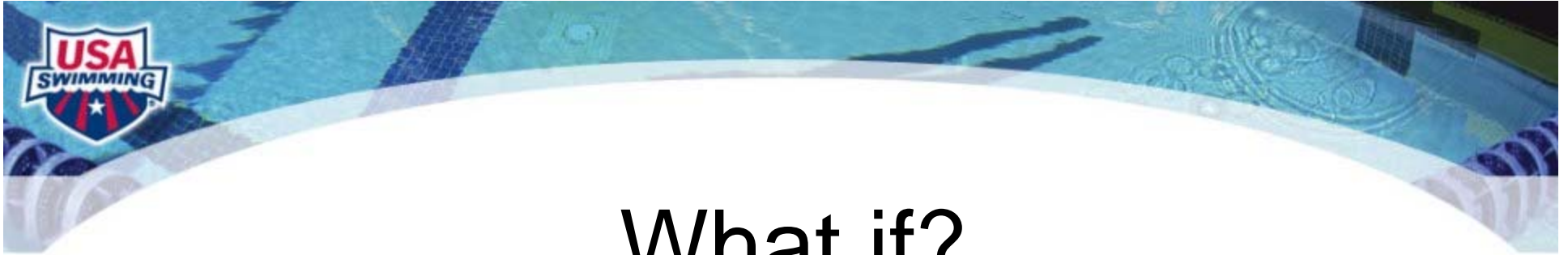


# Communicating in a Crisis

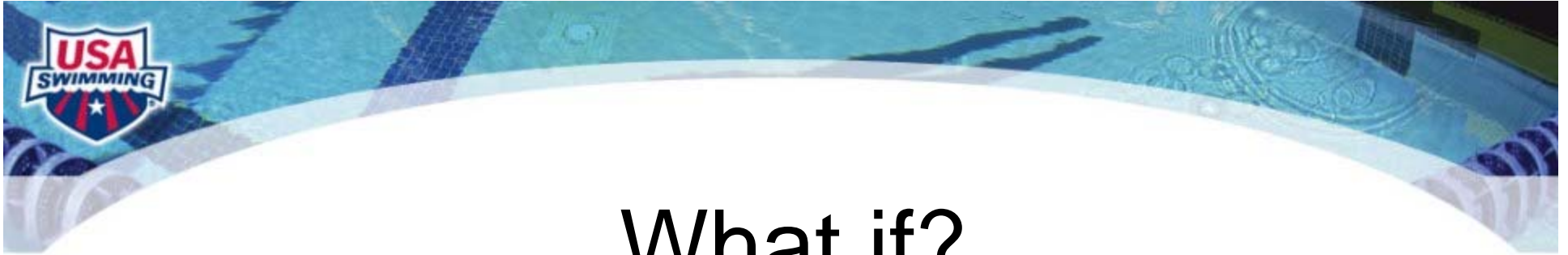
Does Your Club or LSC Have a Plan?

“Failure to prepare is preparation for failure.”



# What if?

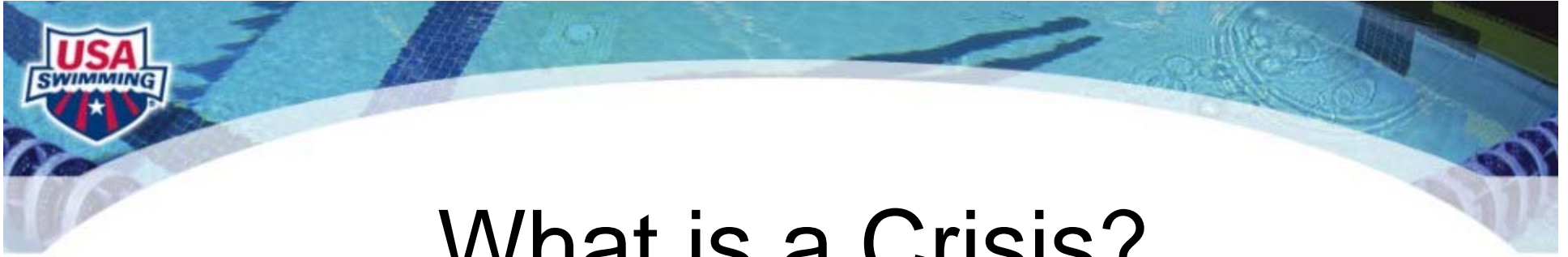
- Your LSC president is arrested?
- A swimmer is critically injured or killed at a meet?
- Your facility becomes unsafe?
- Your organization is sued, or the target of an investigation?
- There's a violent attack at a meet?



# What if?

- Who would you tell?
- Who would answer calls from parents?
- Who would speak to the media?
- Do you know?

***“You'd Better Have a Hose if You Want to Put Out the Fire” - Rene A. Henry***



# What is a Crisis?

A crisis is any situation that threatens the integrity or reputation of your company, usually brought on by adverse or negative media attention. It can also be a situation where in the eyes of the media or general public your company did not react to one of the above situations in the appropriate manner.



# Crisis Coverage



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**Jones pleads guilty, admits lying about steroids**  
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**Ap** Associated Press  
updated 3:40 p.m. MT, Fri., Oct . 5, 2007

**MSNBC video**

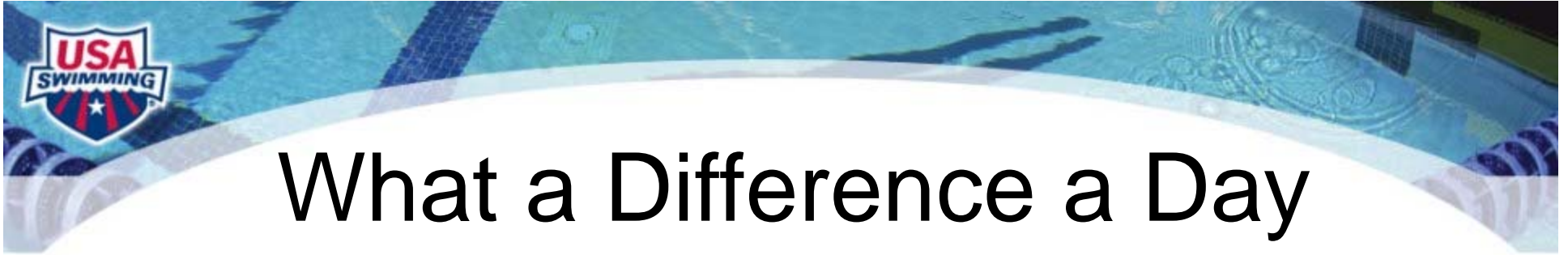


**Arena League player dies after bad tackle**  
**Avengers' Lucas apparently dies from spinal cord injury**



# Communicating in a Crisis TIPS

1. Stay Calm
2. Keep the appropriate people informed
3. Have a plan
4. Be honest
5. React quickly



# What a Difference a Day Makes

How you react in a crisis can make ALL the difference.

If you don't have a plan in place to react quickly, you will miss your window.

Look at two national tragedies in our history, and think, from a perception perspective, how you feel about the reaction.



# Crisis Communication Plan

1. Identify your “Information Officer”
2. Identify your Crisis Communications Team
3. Identify your key stakeholders
4. Identify spokespeople
5. Create a process
6. Identify best practices
7. Identify a “Crisis Control Center”





# The Information Officer

*Your information officer will be the Commander-in-Chief of your Crisis Communications Plan. This person must be available, thorough, detail-oriented, able to stay calm in a crisis.*

My Club/LSC's Information Officer is: \_\_\_\_\_



# Crisis Communications Team

- Consists of your Information Officer and other key club contacts (Board President, Head Coach, etc.)
- Should be 3-4 people.
- Must be constantly accessible.
- Situational Contacts? Secondary Team?

My Club/LSC's Crisis Team is: \_\_\_\_\_



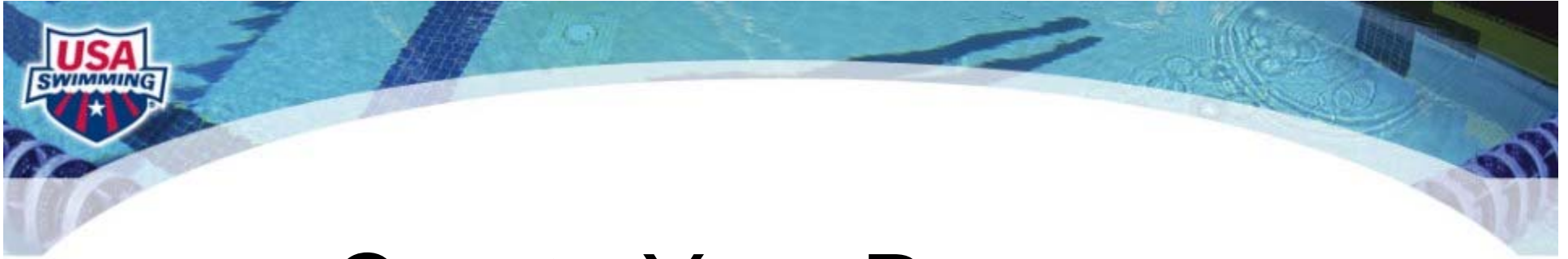
# Stakeholders

*Stakeholders are those who have a vested interest in your club/LSC. Know who will contact them, and when.*

- Board of Directors
- Staff / Volunteers
- Facility Staff
- Parents / Swimmers
- Media / Public

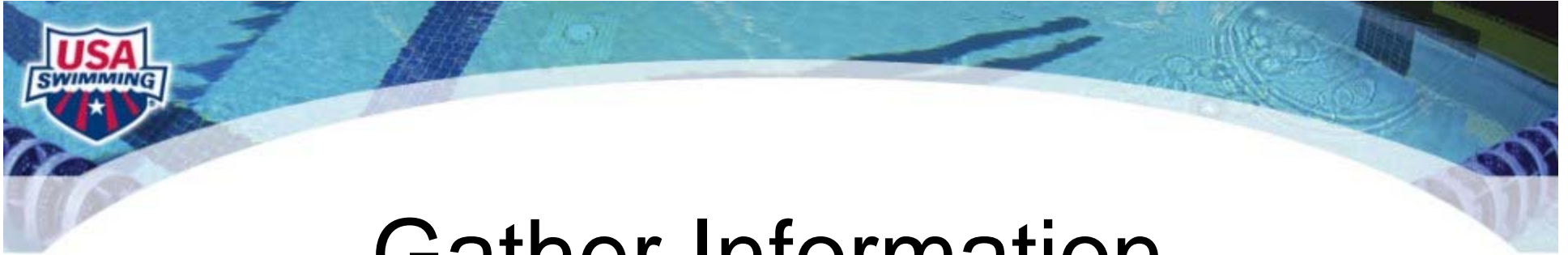
My Club/LSC's Stakeholders are:

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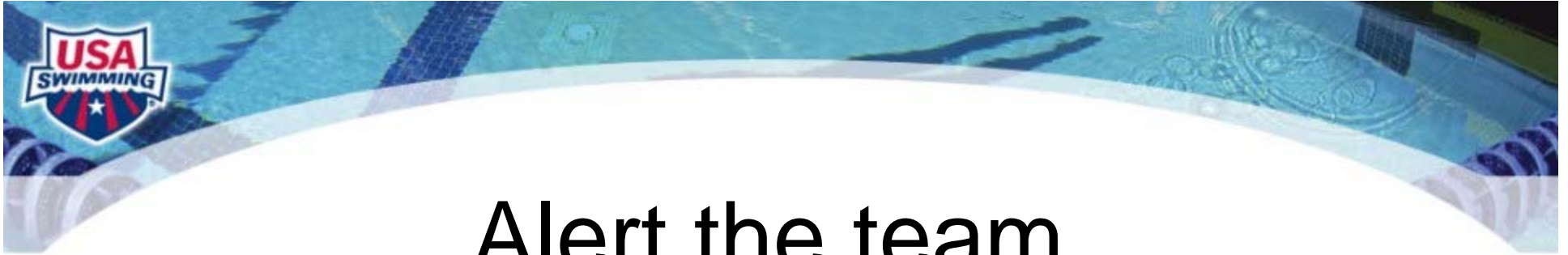
# Create Your Process

1. Gather and confirm all the information (IO)
2. Alert Crisis Comm. Team (IO)
3. Formulate your response (Team)
4. Come up with a plan & timetable (Team)
5. Loop in appropriate stakeholders (IO)
6. Communicate (IO, Spokesperson)
7. Assess Situation



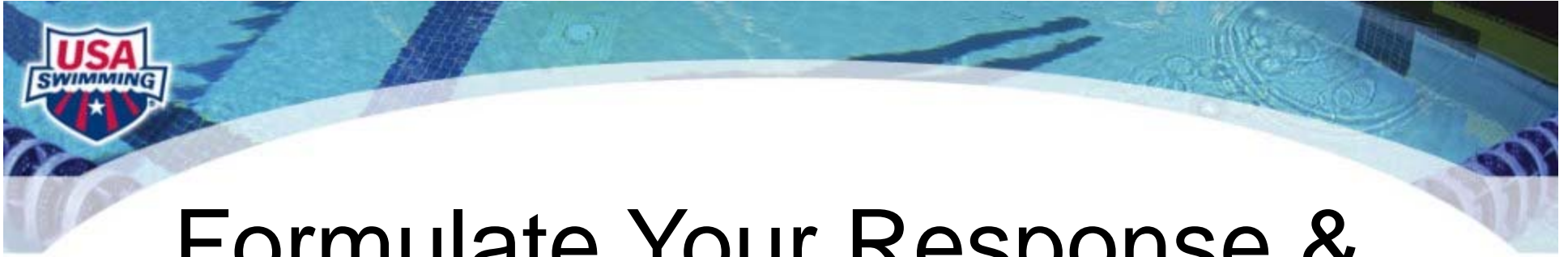
# Gather Information

- 1- What happened?
- 2- When and where did it happen?
- 3- Who is affected?
- 4- Why did it happen / What caused it?
- 5- What was / is the reaction?
- 6- What are the repercussions?
- 7- When will you have an update?



# Alert the team

- 1- Information officer calls the “Crisis Team” together. How will you do this?
- 2- Know who your “Crisis Team” is, and be able to get a hold of them any time of day or night.
- 3- Be aware of “Situational” contacts.
- 4- Consider identifying a “Crisis Center” or hotline.



# Formulate Your Response & Come Up with a Plan

- 1- What will you do?
- 2- When will you do it?
- 3-What will you say & who will say it?
- 4- Who will you tell & When?
- 5- How will you tell them?

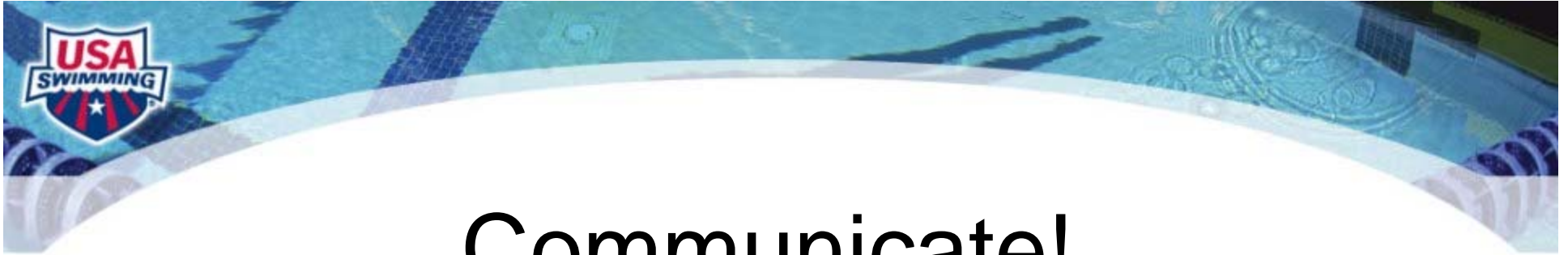


# Alert Key Stakeholders

1- Provide background, response, and timetable.

2- Arm them with contact information for your information officer / Spokesperson





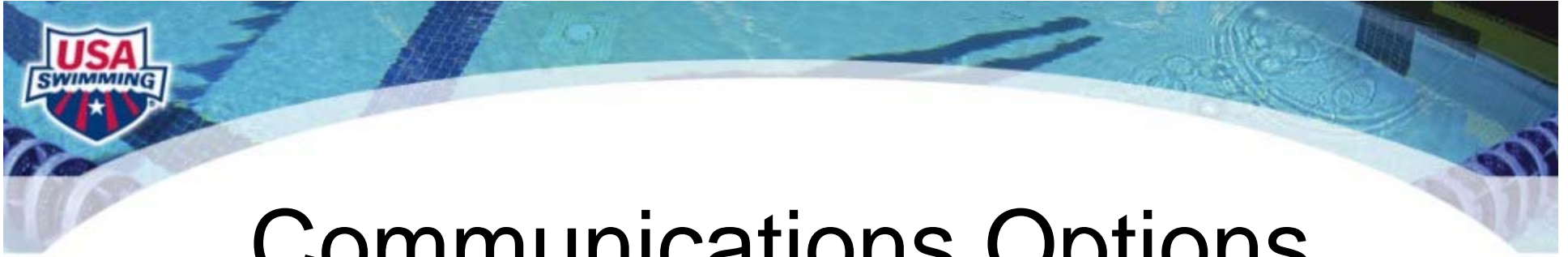
# Communicate!

- 1- Stay calm
- 2- Be clear
- 3- Stay on message
- 4- Return phone calls & emails
- 5- Use all appropriate vehicles (websites, emails, phone, etc.)



# Your Response

# Options



# Communications Options

- Statement (Proactive or Reactive)
- News conference
- Spokesperson Interviews
- The Hybrid Approach (A combination of the above)



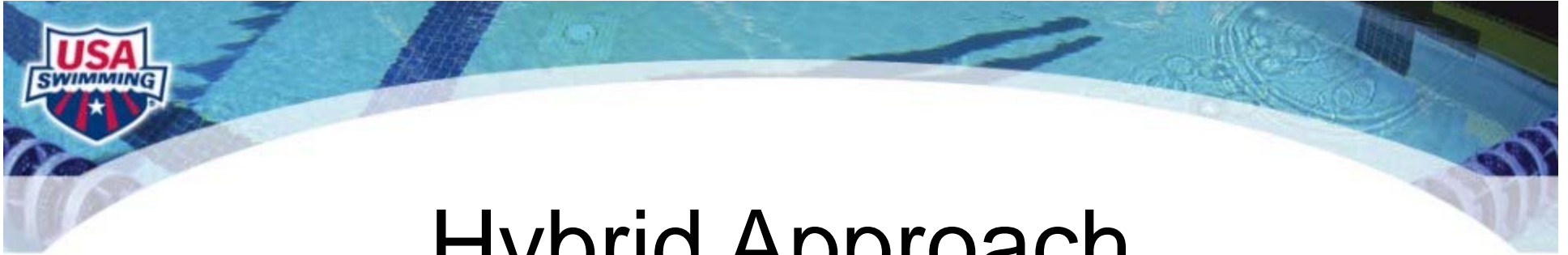
# Statements: When to use them

- When you are limited in what you can say for legal or confidentiality reasons.
- When it's important to get your position out quickly, or to a wide audience.
- When you are still investigating, and are not prepared to speak publicly (“Holding statement”).
- Reactive: Provided only if asked.
- Proactive: Provided / sent to media in advance of phone calls or questions.



# Case Study: News Conference

- When you need to reach a lot of media and a lot of public quickly.
- When you want to show strength / solidarity.
- When you have a strong enough spokesperson to handle it.



# Hybrid Approach

- When action is required / appropriate.
- When you want include in your communication that your organization is *doing* something about the problem / crisis.



# Best Practices

1. Don't say "No Comment"- Ever
2. Return phone calls and Emails
3. Be obsessive about details
4. Have ONE person designated to talk to the media- not five
5. Be honest
6. Share information with your stakeholders
7. Make sure everyone has your Information Officer's contact information
8. Don't "wait it out." Or "Go Silent"



# What are the Elements of a Crisis Communications Plan?

1. Information Officer
2. Crisis Teams (Primary, Secondary, Situational)
3. Stakeholders
4. Plan / Process
5. Communication tools





# What are the Steps?

1. Get all the information
2. Alert / call together Crisis Team
3. Formulate your response
4. Come up with a plan
5. Loop in appropriate stakeholders
6. Communicate
7. Assess Situation