Crisis Workforce Motivation Training Course: Morale, Workload and Recognition

14 – 18 December 2026
Rome

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Ref: 817_38253 **Date:** 14 – 18 December 2026 **Location:** Rome **Fees:** 5500 GBP

Programme Summary

Crisis workforce motivation is the subject of this one-week training course for directors, HR leaders and senior managers who lead people through prolonged disruption, ending in a workforce motivation plan for one team or unit. During a long crisis, pressure on staff rises while certainty falls, and leaders often rely on goodwill that wears thin. The programme moves from the drivers of motivation and the people impact of a crisis to communication, workload and wellbeing, then to recognition and the recovery of morale. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme on crisis workforce motivation to mixed-organisation cohorts.

The Business Case

Hospitals, airlines, banks, utilities and public agencies depend on staff who keep working through uncertainty, long hours and changing instructions. Employee motivation shapes whether people stay, take care and keep standards when supervision is thin. Leaders who treat motivation as a management routine rather than a morale event can respond sooner when signs of strain appear.

- Staff Retention: Improves when workload, fairness and recognition are managed through the disruption.
- Service Continuity: Holds when teams understand priorities and trust the information they receive.
- Absence and Strain: Fall when early warning indicators trigger support before burnout sets in.

Principles and Evidence Base

- Self-Determination Theory: Explains motivation through autonomy, competence and relatedness, applied in Session 1 to a motivation drivers map and in Session 4 to recognition choices.
- ISO 45003: Gives guidance on managing psychosocial risk at work, applied in Sessions 1 and 3 to the hazard scan and the wellbeing pathway.
- ISO 45001: Sets requirements for occupational health and safety management systems, applied in Session 3 to worker participation and safe workload.

Intended Participants

- Directors who set expectations of staff during prolonged disruption.
- HR leaders who design support, communication and reward responses.
- Senior managers who direct teams on the front line of the crisis.
- Executives who answer to boards and owners for workforce stability.

Typical settings include healthcare, aviation, banking, utilities and public services.

Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to diagnose the motivation drivers and strain points in a workforce under prolonged disruption.
2. Participants will be able to design a communication routine that keeps staff informed and heard.
3. Participants will be able to prioritise workload reductions that protect safety and service.
4. Participants will be able to construct a wellbeing support pathway with early warning indicators.
5. Participants will be able to evaluate recognition and reward options for fairness.
6. Participants will be able to justify a workforce motivation plan to an executive sponsor.

Programme Structure

Day 1: Crisis Workforce Motivation Foundations

What drives motivation when conditions are unstable and demands are high?

- Self-Determination Theory Needs Map
- Crisis Phase People Impact Review
- ISO 45003 Psychosocial Hazard Scan
- Workforce Pulse Survey Design
- Leader Role Charter

Day 2: Communication and Trust in Prolonged Disruption

What do employees need to hear, how often and from whom?

- Staff Communication Rhythm Plan
- Cascade Briefing Script
- Rumour and Question Log
- Two-Way Listening Forum Outline
- Fairness Message Check

Day 3: Workload, Wellbeing and Safe Working

How is workload set so that people stay safe and effective?

- Workload Load-Shedding Grid
- Shift and Rest Pattern Review
- ISO 45001 Worker Participation Checklist
- Wellbeing Support Pathway Map
- Burnout Warning Indicator Set

Day 4: Recognition, Fairness and Morale Recovery

Which actions rebuild morale as the crisis eases?

- Recognition Option Menu
- Reward Fairness Review
- Team Contribution Record
- Morale Recovery Roadmap
- Return-to-Normal Transition Brief

Day 5: Crisis Workforce Motivation Plan for One Team or Unit

Do the earlier tools combine into one plan a sponsor can approve?

- Applying the Session 1 Psychosocial Hazard Scan
- Testing the Session 2 Staff Communication Rhythm Plan
- Checking the Session 3 Workload Load-Shedding Grid
- Rehearsing the Session 4 Morale Recovery Roadmap
- Completing the Crisis Workforce Motivation Plan

Methodology

The programme uses a structured exercise built on prepared case material for two organisations, a hospital group and an airline, each facing months of disruption with staff survey extracts, rota data, internal messages and absence figures. Participants work in groups, challenge each other's choices and defend their plan to peers acting as an executive sponsor.

- Suggested activity: Rewriting a leader message that promised too much and delivered too little.
- Suggested activity: Cutting a team workload by a third while protecting safety checks.
- Suggested activity: Reading a pulse survey and choosing the three actions to take first.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a crisis workforce motivation plan for one team or unit. It holds a drivers map, a communication rhythm, a workload and wellbeing plan with warning indicators, a recognition approach and a morale recovery roadmap. At work it is used to brief a sponsor, to guide managers in daily conversations and to review team resilience at fixed intervals.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is a training course on crisis workforce motivation suitable for leaders without an HR background?

Yes. Crisis workforce motivation is taught through prepared cases and templates. The programme assumes you lead people or set policy for them, but needs no earlier work in HR or psychology.

Which standards and models does crisis workforce motivation rest on?

Crisis workforce motivation rests on Self-Determination Theory for motivation, ISO 45003 for psychosocial risk and ISO 45001 for occupational health and safety management, each applied to prepared cases.

How is the plan from crisis workforce motivation used at work?

You use the crisis workforce motivation plan to brief your sponsor, guide managers in daily conversations, and review warning indicators at fixed intervals.

How does crisis workforce motivation differ from a programme on crisis communication?

Crisis workforce motivation covers workload, wellbeing, recognition and morale for staff over a long disruption, while a crisis communication programme concentrates on messages to media and external audiences.