

STEP 1: ANALYSE YOUR BUSINESS

Also known as business impact analysis, this determines which area of the company's activities are crucial to the running of the business.

A business impact analysis enables an organisation to focus its risk assessment on the mission critical activities of the organisation rather than conducting a traditional all risks analysis.

However well you understand your business, it will help to talk to other people

- You need the fullest possible picture of the complex interactions inside your organisation and between you, your customers and suppliers.
- You'll have the chance to help your colleagues understand why a business continuity plan is important.
- You want the people in your company involved. Knowing that their contribution is part of the planning and implementation process is important.
- You can include expert knowledge about every part of the business within your continuity plan.
- You can find out if any part of the business already has plans or procedures to deal with a major incident or terrorist attack. You'll need to include or adapt them in your plan for the whole business.

Mission Critical Activities

To assess mission critical activities consider which operations are crucial to the running of your business.

What is essential to the running of the business?	Grade on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 is classed as essential down to 5 which is least essential)
Employees?	
Products?	
Services you provide?	
Location?	
Major Client(s)?	
Main Supplier(s)?	
Specialist equipment?	
Unique premises?	
Time sensitive processes?	
Shareholders?	

The Mission Critical priority list can be used during an emergency to assist decision making regarding the compilation of a Recovery Action Plan as to which function of the business/organisation needs to be reinstated first.

Internal factors

Consider the factors which influence the impact of an incident on your business. Try to establish where your business is at its most vulnerable if an incident occurs.

Consider:

- Staff
- Customers
- Suppliers
- Systems and processes
- Partnerships
- Buildings
- Timescales

Here is a sample list of questions for you to consider

Here are some questions to consider with regards to your staff:	Answer:
Grade departmental importance - which department is most/least vital?	
When is the departmental function most essential?	
Which people are most essential and when? Consider different timescales of a few hours, 24 hours, 5 days etc.	
Do you have contact details at another location for all your staff and key employers? Are they up-to-date?	
Do you have a plan of who needs to do what in case of an incident?	
Do you have a crisis team?	
Have you nominated deputies for the members of the crisis team in case they are not available?	
Have you specialist staff – do you have effective cover if they are absent?	
How will your contractual obligations affect your emergency reponse?	
Can your suppliers guarantee delivery? Have you alternative arrangements	
Do you have effective maintenance contracts to protect your systems, buildings and equipment?	
Do you have project/delivery deadlines?	
Are your premises vulnerable? (security problems, fire, flooding)	

Singular problems to unique activities.

An activity may be unique to your business or have a unique aspect due to its complexity. You may have to take some time to consider probable resolutions and any implications.

What if scenarios

Grade in order of likelihood (1 being the most likely).

The grid gives some examples, please expand as necessary to cover scenarios that would disrupt your ability to deliver your service

Grade on a scale of 1-5		Define (examples)	Suggest preventative action:
	If you could not deliver an order to a customer?	broken van	Tel No for hire firm
		road closures	Alternative route
	If your staff could not get to work?	Illness	
	If your suppliers or customers could not get access to your premises?	Road closures Scene of crime	
	If your IT system was damaged?	Flooding	
	If your specialist machinery was damaged?	Fire	
	If your telecoms were down?		
	If your business partner fell ill?		
	If you could not get access to your building?	Loss of keys Scene of crime Neighbouring building deemed unsafe	
	If a vital order was delayed?		
	If you could not operate from your location?		
	If you became ill over a long period of time?		
	If you are unable to pay your staff/suppliers? Think of reputation, not only the short term.		

Worst case scenarios

Using the scenarios identified in the previous grid develop the worst case scenario for your business/organization

What would be the worst-case scenario for your organisation?	Define	Suggest preventative action:
How long before your business would be severely affected:		
hours		
days		
months		
Would it survive the disruption?		
Do you have insurance against this eventuality?		
Do you have copies of insurance papers off-site?		
How much can you afford to lose if unable to run your business for		
days		
weeks		
months		
What do you need to do to stay operational?		
Do all heads of departments agree that this is the worst-case scenario?		

External influences

Singular problems to unique activities

External influences

What external factors are likely to affect your business during a crisis?

Aspect affecting you	The way it's affecting you:	Preventative Action:
Local community	Mixed opinion about what you manufacture	Community project/local help
Your competitors	Do they have a BCP?/ how did they deal with things?	Research
Government	New legislation	Need to comply?
Transport	Cancelled public transport	Have a list of employees with their own transport/ organise shuttle bus/ organise accommodation etc.
War/trouble in a different country	Reduced customer confidence affecting imports/ exports	Have money in reserve for special advertising campaign etc.