

STEP 4: DEVELOP AND KEEP DEVELOPING YOUR PLAN

In the process of developing your plan, make sure you have consulted all the decision makers in the business and involved your staff. Also, make sure you use non-technical language when writing up the plan, making it accessible to all your employees.

Has your business continuity plan incorporated all the necessary components?

Check your business continuity plan against the following:	Tick off
Does your organisation have a clearly defined, up-to-date business continuity plan for its entire weakest links, mission critical activities and their dependencies?	
Does your plan reflect the most up-to-date business impact analysis and risk analysis?	
Does your plan clearly define the role of the accountable business owner of the plan? (This could be the MD, CEO or business owner...)	
Has your plan been approved and signed off?	
Is it clear who is responsible for the plan's maintenance?	
Is the plan regularly reviewed in terms of its mission critical activities by the agreed person, such as the legal rep?	
Does the plan establish a clearly predefined response if an incident occurs until the point of full operation?	
Does the plan clearly define how to recover critical activities within the specified time frame?	
Does your plan clearly define personnel roles, their accountability, responsibility and authority?	

Check your business continuity plan against the following:	Tick off
Have you established an appropriate time frame for review of the plan?	
Does the plan provide and define clear aims and objectives?	
Are there clear instructions on how to use your plan?	
Does the plan contain a diagram of the business continuity management structure?	
Does the plan clearly state the appropriate responses according to the emergency?	
Do you have clear details regarding purchasing, expenditure, and authority?	
Do you have a list of contents?	
Distribution list?	
Glossary of terms?	

Developing your plan:

You may wish to divide your plan into tasks to do immediately following an incident and those thereafter to avoid confusion.

To develop the plan you should have input from a cross section of your organisation ensuring that you include all grades within the hierarchy. This is vital to ensure a practical and workable plan.

Large organisations often consult with outside organisations who may be able to provide assistance when drawing up the plan:

Find out from your local authority emergency planning officer what they would do in response to a major incident or terrorist attack.

Keep in touch with neighbouring businesses. How can you help each other?

Find out what information utility companies need in case of an incident.

What information will your insurer need from you? Please make sure that you create inventory lists according to your needs. It is worth checking in advance if your insurance cover will allow replacing damaged items immediately, or whether you need the insurance company's consent.

Think of who else will be affected by your decisions: your customers and suppliers? Involve them if you can in the planning process. How will they want the information communicated if an incident occurs?

Liaison with the emergency services and other organizations

Talk to the local liaison officer of the respective emergency services to find out what their procedures are and what they will need from you if an incident occurs. Emergency services are often willing to visit companies and perform seminars on such subjects as evacuation procedures or safety to your employees.

The Fire Protection Association has published a useful guide: "Safety at Scenes of Fire and Related Incidents" which also covers problems of chemicals, biological hazards and building safety.

Additional Analysis Tools

For those seeking more analysis tools, the following are examples of methods, tools and techniques that you can use to help you develop your business continuity plan (as listed in "Business Continuity Management - Good Practice Guide", published by the BCI, 2002.

A Strategy Planning Process Model ([click here to view](#))

SWOT Analysis (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats)

Porter's Value Chain Analysis

PEST Analysis (Political/ Environmental/ Social/ Technical)

Scenario planning

Cost Benefit Analysis

Business Impact and Risk Assessment Quartile Matrix

Financial Management

Benchmarking (metrics and process)

Current State Assessment 'Gap' Analysis

Questionnaires

Scorecards

Interviews (structured and unstructured)

External Advice

For the more complex business, it is worthwhile consulting an expert for advice. There are companies who specialise in providing this type of service, ranging from providing advice to devising the whole plan from start to finish.

Technology Resources

There are companies providing information back-up services. You can arrange them to collect data/ copies of information every day, week or month. Alternatively, you can store back ups at another site, at your buddy's site or at home.

Some organisations will want to give instructions over a central audio system to all employees, it is useful to have recorded messages for all types of incidents, including testing of fire alarm, but also instructions of what to do in case of an external incident. It is also worthwhile having pre-prepared messages for relatives and next of kin, what to say to them over the phone, in person or in writing. This will be useful if some staff could not be found or taken to hospital for treatment etc.