

In the event of an unforeseen incident or disaster, it is important to have a strategy to address the unexpected scenario and to reduce the likelihood of extended business interruption. A business continuity plan identifies potential threats and vulnerabilities, incorporating specific protocols that target critical operations to ensure businesses can respond to and recover from an interruption. This toolkit is meant to be a guide to help your organization update or create its business continuity plan, and each of the following documents should be customized based on your organization’s needs.

While the components of business continuity plans may differ between organizations, it is common for business continuity plans to utilize the following tools:

Distribution List Template

A distribution list is the first element of a plan. It identifies individuals who have been provided with a copy of the business continuity plan and the business function they represent.

Distribution List				
Copy no.	Name	Position	Phone no.	Email Address

Risk Management Plan Template

A risk management plan aims to evaluate and quantify the impact of potential risks and threats and determine which areas should be prioritized from a time and resource perspective.

Risk Management Plan				
Risk description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk level	Preventive actions

Summary of Insurance Coverage Template

A summary of current insurance coverage(s) section outlines an organization's policy details and helps expose any gaps in coverage. An organization should work with their insurance Broker to ensure all aspects of their business are protected.

Summary of Insurance Coverage				
Insurance type	Coverage	Insurance company	Policy no.	Policy period

Data Backup Protocols Template

It is imperative to back up business data at regular intervals, including using off-site storage locations. A data backup protocol record captures measures taken to prevent the loss of critical electronic data during an IT-related incident.

Data Backup Protocols				
Data to be backed up	Backup frequency	Backup mechanism	Person responsible	Backup procedures

Business Activity Questionnaire Template

A business activity questionnaire captures the impact of interruptions to functions, products, and services that are most important to a business's financial success and longevity as part of a business impact analysis (BIA).

Business Activity Questionnaire			
Function/department name			
Description of activities			
Provide details on the internal dependencies of function			
Staffing		IT applications	
Machinery/equipment		Support services	
Facilities		Other internal dependencies	
Provide details on the external dependencies of function			
Suppliers (i.e., raw materials, etc.)			
Third-party subcontractors			
Clients (particularly if operations are contingent on relatively few clients)			
Other external dependencies			
Describe the financial ramifications if this function could not be performed for a prolonged period (e.g., loss of revenue, increased costs, fines/penalties, etc.).			
Describe the non-financial ramifications if this function could not be performed for a prolonged period (e.g., staff resignations, damage to reputation, etc.).			
For what maximum amount of time could this business activity be unavailable before the losses would occur?			
Are there seasonal impacts or other factors that might affect operations at different points during the year?			
What expenses (beyond normal budgets) might need to be incurred by continuing operations during and after a disruption?			
Additional comments:			

Business Impact Analysis Template

A business impact analysis summarizes the criticality of key business functions. It establishes a recovery time priority for each, which is the time frame within which the function must be recovered before serious harm is done to a business.

Business Impact Analysis				
Critical business activity	Description	Priority	Impact of loss	Recovery time objective

Immediate Response Checklist Template

An immediate response checklist outlines initial actions to be taken following an incident. It ensures that a business is well-prepared to respond promptly and efficiently to mitigate any potential disruptions to business operations.

Immediate Response Checklist		
	Actions taken	Details
	Business continuity plan activated	
	Assessed severity of incident	
	Premises evacuated (if necessary)	
	Staff located and accounted for	
	Personnel briefed on incident	
	Contacted emergency services	
	Initiated event log	
	Activated incident response team, roles, and responsibilities	
	Assessed damage	
	Identified critical activities that have been disrupted	
	Contacted key internal and external stakeholders	
	Appointed organization spokesperson	
	Initiated media/public relations response	

Roles and Responsibilities Template

A roles and responsibilities list summarizes the names and respective responsibilities of each incident response team member. The list includes a team leader and support staff who are qualified to fulfil their roles during an incident.

Roles and Responsibilities				
Role	Designated individual		Alternate / backup	
	Name		Name	
	Phone no.		Phone no.	
Responsibilities:				
Role	Designated individual		Alternate / backup	
	Name		Name	
	Phone no.		Phone no.	
Responsibilities:				
Role	Designated individual		Alternate / backup	
	Name		Name	
	Phone no.		Phone no.	
Responsibilities:				
Role	Designated individual		Alternate / backup	
	Name		Name	
	Phone no.		Phone no.	
Responsibilities:				

Staff Contact List Template

A list of staff contact information should be posted in an accessible area in case of an emergency.

Staff Contact List					
Name	Position	Phone no.		Email address	
		Business	Personal	Business	Personal

External Contact List Template

Key external contacts, such as emergency services, should be documented and posted in an area accessible to an organization's employees.

External Contact List	
Contact Type	Phone no.
Police department	
Fire department	
Emergency medical services	
Hospital	
Security monitoring company	
Insurance company	
Electricity provider	
Natural gas provider	
Water supply provider	
Sewer company	
Telecommunications provider	

Business Recovery Plan Tools

Business recovery is the return to operations following an incident or disaster. The following templates are used to establish a recovery framework, with an aim to reduce recovery time and minimize losses.

Recovery Checklist	
Incident details	
	Record details of any injured people, including staff, customers, and other members of the public
	Photograph or record damage to buildings, equipment, company vehicles, and stock
	Record impact on your business functions
	Record any anticipated damage to your business's reputation
Communication to staff	
	Conduct a critical incident debrief within 24 hours following an incident
	Hold a meeting with your staff to ask them about their reactions to the crisis
	Inform staff about the recovery process and schedule regular updates
	Keep staff informed about what is expected of them
	Advise staff whether they should return to work the next day
Contact insurer	
	Contact your insurance company to initiate the claim filing process, if necessary
	Photograph or record damage to your premises, fixtures, vehicles, stock, customer records, and equipment to support claims
Review of recovery process	
	Record what you have learned from this crisis, including what went well and what did not
	Consider and record key lessons learned
	Review and update your recovery plan

Recovery Plan

Critical business activity	Recovery actions	Resource requirements	Recovery time objective	Responsible personnel	Date completed

Supplier Information

Name	Status		Address	Phone no.	Email address	Main contact
	Current	Backup				

Customer Information

Name	Address	Phone no.	Email address	Main contact

Critical Equipment and Machinery

Make	Model	Function	Primary supplier	Alternate supplier	Order time for replacement

Review Schedule Template

Business continuity plans should be reviewed every six to twelve months. In the event of significant business changes, more frequent reviews may be necessary. Reviews should be documented accordingly in a review schedule, including the review date, why the review took place, and a description of any changes made to the plan.

Review Schedule		
Review date	Reason for review	Modifications made