

FACT SHEET

Business Continuity

Quick Summary

- A Business Continuity Plan (BCM) is putting procedures in place that minimize the disruption to your business when things go wrong. For example – power cuts or supplier administration
- Expecting the unexpected is crucial for the survival of your business – and it's better to be prepared than not
- Keep your Business Continuity Plan safe and sound. It's your key to recovering your business!



Business Continuity Management

It is not new knowledge to say that – like most things in life – the unexpected is always likely to happen. BCM is simply about thinking ahead and planning for unexpected business interruptions or disruptions thereby reducing their impact and placing your business in the best possible position to weather the disruption and bounce back afterwards.

Don't think that because you are either a one-man-army business or a huge multi-million-pound corporation that disruptions won't affect your organisation or business.

BCM considers the risks to the business and involves taking steps to reduce – or where possible - eliminate the likelihood of an incident arising from those risks. BCM involves identifying the threats to normal working e.g. access denied to buildings or loss of large numbers of staff, and working out in advance, how you would manage if one or more of these disrupting events occurred.

The benefits of BCM

Good BCM delivers a number of benefits including

- Key functions and services within the business are identified
- Impacts of an operational disruption are proactively identified
- Incident management capability is enabled through the creation of a Business Continuity Plan thereby ensuring an effective response to an incident, which minimises the impact on the service or organisation
- Staff are rehearsed and trained in ways of working through an incident
- BCM arrangements of service providers, partners, suppliers and contractors are examined
- The people, assets and reputation of the business are protected
- vBCM benefits everyone, staff, customers, suppliers, partners, the community and economy

What type of incidents should you plan for?

Any incident, large or small, whether it is natural, accidental or deliberate could result in severe disruption to your organisation. The table below provides examples of hazards and how a related incident could impact on your business.

| Hazard | Potential impact on your business |
|--|--|
| Fire, flooding, gas leak | Loss of, or restricted access to your premises |
| Fuel or transport interruptions, severe weather, industrial action, widespread outbreak of disease | Loss of staff |
| Power failures, loss of utilities, disruptions to IT or telephones | Loss of key systems |
| Suppliers go into administration or have a disruption in their normal working | Loss - or a break in - your supply chain |



Any of the above could jeopardise the future viability of your business, however by being proactive rather than reactive, you can prepare your business for disruptions and put it in the best possible position for survival and recovery by producing a Business Continuity Plan. If one or more of these disrupting events occurred.

Business Continuity Plan

A Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is a documented set of procedures and information that is developed, compiled and maintained in readiness for use in the event of a disruption.

A BCP will not only make coping with a disruption or incident easier, it makes it possible for you to minimise the impact on your business, staff and customers. The BCP enables you to continue to deliver your essential services or functions - to an acceptable level - throughout that disrupting event and includes procedures for returning to normal working, once the event has passed. In short, it is about ensuring that a crisis is managed quickly and effectively and does not escalate into a disaster.

You also need to make sure that your key suppliers and partners have effective BCM arrangements in place to ensure that an incident affecting them doesn't impact on you.

Due to the fact this document has to be ready to use at a moment's notice, it is vital that it's kept up-to-date with the correct information. Outdated information means there is a slower start to maintaining the issue which will negatively affect your business.

For information on what to include in a BCP please see the template below:

1. Plan for the effects of an incident, not the cause. At the time of a crisis what happens may well be more important than what caused it.
2. Remember that prevention is better than a cure.
3. Test systems, exercise plans and rehearse the people involved on a regular basis. Maintain the plans - keep them up to date, build in a regular review of your plan.
4. Back up data regularly and store copies off site in a secure place. Practice restoring the data in an IT system outside your own company office to ensure that it works.
5. Ensure that important paper documents, such as contracts and employee information are protected. Make copies and use fire resistant and waterproof storage.

6. Keep a list of contact details for your staff, customers and suppliers off-site so that you can contact them if you do not have access to your usual premises. Review regularly.
7. Be clear about what your insurances cover and what they don't. Keep copies of the relevant policies off-site so that you know immediately what to do in the event of an incident.
8. Have an emergency pack which will include your business recovery plan, key telephone numbers, as well as a first aid kit, torch, megaphone, spare keys, cash, credit card, stationery etc.
9. Make arrangements for a temporary base - you may not be able to operate out of your existing premises for weeks or even months. Remember, any temporary accommodation still has to comply with health and safety rules.
10. Make an inventory of equipment, materials, products and any other assets to give you an overview of the business. This will make it easier to work out losses and identify gaps in core resources after an incident.



Need more support?

Get in touch!



For more information visit www.businesslincolnshire.com where you can request support from one of our advisers by filling in the online contact form.



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