Crisis simulation exercise

A range of scenario-based crisis simulation exercises, customised to meet your own organisation’s unique situation and your team’s learning objectives, suitable if:

- Your experienced Crisis Management Team (CMT) needs to be challenged and enthusiasm maintained, continuing to prove that your crisis management plan will work (developing or mature)
- You have a newly formed team that must learn the crisis management process and how to operate effectively with each other under challenging circumstances (emerging)
- You would like to use a crisis simulation exercise as a means of demonstrating the need for business continuity and obtaining executive buy-in to your Business Continuity Planning (BCP) programme (ad hoc)

“No battle plan survives contact with the enemy.”
- Helmuth von Moltke, 1800-1891

Highlights

- Designed and delivered by IBM’s highly experienced and dedicated team of business continuity consultants
- Unbiased and independent ‘good practice’ crisis and business continuity management advice aimed at developing your capabilities and improving your plans
- Backed by IBM’s broader consulting resources and possessing the industry knowledge to ensure a solution can be found, whatever your problem.
When was the last time your executive team reviewed its crisis management plans or trained in crisis management? Is everyone clear on the crisis management process and their role? The first few hours following a major incident are often pivotal – will your management team be ready to react swiftly and effectively when the worst really does happen?

The service
When a crisis or disaster strikes an organisation the effect upon your business can be dramatic, particularly if the onset is sudden. Actions during the first few hours can be crucial. This is the worst possible moment to discover that your plans are flawed and key personnel do not know what to do. Whilst planning and preparedness are important, testing is arguably the most vital component of an organisation’s business continuity/crisis management programme, and yet only eight percent of companies test their continuity plans (source: DTI, 2004). Without testing, the first time an organisation might realise there are flaws with its plans could be when it takes an impact on its bottom line following a business interruption.

Helmuth von Moltke (1800-1891), a famously successful Prussian Chief of Staff, wrote a number of works on military theory. His main treatise was that military strategy is a system of options since only the beginning of the military operation can be planned. As a result, he considered the main task of military leaders to consist of the extensive preparation for all possible outcomes. This can be summarised by two of his dictums that remain useful for business continuity and crisis managers to this day, which are “No battle plan survives contact with the enemy,” and “War is a matter of expedients.” Crisis simulation exercises help you to prepare for managing the unexpected; to make decisions under pressure with the best information available at the time and to regain the initiative.

Crisis simulation exercises are generally classroom-based theoretical plan tests or walkthroughs involving your crisis management or business continuity recovery team leaders and their deputies that allow theoretical testing of your response to imaginary incidents.

The purpose is to validate plans and allow learning in a safe and low risk environment under expert oversight. Scenario-based exercises are often the most cost-effective and rapid way to test certain business continuity activities and in particular the best way to test your immediate response to a sudden and debilitating situation.

Scenario-based exercises are often used for the CMT. If the CMT has not exercised before or very infrequently, the learning objectives are to achieve familiarity with the crisis management process and the challenges presented by the nature of this work, to validate the role, size and composition of the CMT, and to assess the suitability of CMT’s facilities.

Exercises for an experienced CMT might be more challenging, increase in sophistication, include other teams and test not only how those teams fulfil their own roles but also how teams coordinate with each other and offer the CMT a sense of the overall control and communication challenge it could face.
IBM can help organisations to design and run scenario-based simulation exercises that test all aspects of its BCP, including dealing with hostile media under pressure. IBM generally recommends that such exercises start relatively straightforwardly, testing the response to a reasonable worst-case scenario, with subsequent exercises becoming more challenging and testing/stressing specific and agreed aspects of the organisation’s plans during the recovery timeline.

**Why IBM?**

IBM Business Continuity and Recovery Services is a leading provider of business resilience, continuity and disaster recovery solutions. IBM is able to draw upon more than 35 years experience in assisting clients to develop and implement their business continuity strategies and plans. As part of this service, IBM has completed thousands of engagements, large and small, on behalf of over 5,000 clients across a range of industries around the world.

Besides its expertise in business continuity management, IBM has skills in security, high availability solutions, systems and data management, network design and implementation, machine room building and desktop infrastructure as well as platform and application knowledge. Following its acquisition of the PricewaterhouseCoopers Consultancy, IBM also has industry-leading general business consulting skills. This ensures that IBM has a solution for any unforeseen issue likely to be encountered by its clients.

Solutions will be tailored to your multi-vendor environment, geographical location(s) and availability/risk mitigation requirements.

**IBM Business Continuity and Recovery Services include:**

- Managed testing
- Rapid recovery
- Delivery to site.

**Experience and capability**

- Over 35 years of experience
- More than 130 business recovery facilities worldwide including 20 in the UK with eight in London
- An average of over 1,000 tests per year in the UK
- An average of over 30 invocations per year in the UK
- 750 clients in the UK
- More than 10,000 shared and dedicated end-user positions
- Shared and dedicated data centre space
- Single service provider offering the most comprehensive range of end-to-end solutions.

**Recovery timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INCIDENT</td>
<td>Notification, identification and assessment of an incident; accountability, mobilisation, and evacuation of staff; decision to invoke business continuity and disaster recovery; escalation process; internal and external communications and other PR issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response</td>
<td>Coordination and allocation of recovery teams and recovery resources; set-up at alternative site arrangement; prioritisation business processes in recovery; internal and external communications and other PR issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>As recovery set-up but with a view to increasing capacity to near business as usual whilst in a recovery set-up and making longer term planning considerations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>Switch back to production/normal operations, decommissioning of disaster recovery set-up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restoration</td>
<td>A disaster recovery test typically starts and ends here</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recovery timeline**

- Highly critical: 0 – 4hrs
- Critical: 4 – 72hrs
- Less critical: 72hrs – Days, Days to weeks

For more information

To learn more about IBM Business Continuity and Recovery Services, visit: [ibm.com/services/uk/index.wss/it/igs/a1006911](http://ibm.com/services/uk/index.wss/it/igs/a1006911)

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