Business Continuity Planning: Bridge Over Troubled Waters

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What is Business Continuity Planning?

Business Continuity Planning (BCP) helps an organization to develop and document the policies, procedures, activities, and protocols necessary to resume essential business operations immediately following a business interruption.
What are the Sources of Business Interruptions?

- **Natural**
  - Earthquake
  - Flood

- **Civil**
  - Riot
  - Police action

- **Person-made**
  - Computer virus or worm infestation
  - Workplace violence
Other Examples of Sources of Business Interruptions

- Fire
- Loss of electrical power
- Corruption of financial or donor databases
- Loss of critical funding stream
- Bomb threat
- Loss of essential members of staff or executive team
What are the Benefits of BCP?

• Having an effective plan allows the organization to:
  – Remain a viable entity, ready to serve regardless of what happens
  – Maintain the confidence and trust of donors, staff, clients, and other stakeholders
Additional Value of BCP

• In the event of a natural disaster that affects the broader community, such as earthquake or fire, BCP helps the organization to:
  – Play an effective role in disaster response and relief
  – Provide support to clients and staff who may be experiencing the impact of the disaster
Beginning to Plan: First Steps

- Visible commitment to BCP by top management
- Introduction of BCP concepts to staff and managers
- Transforming the organizational culture
- Visible involvement of top management
- Creation of a cross-functional team
Identify Possible Business Interruptions

• Consider both likely interruptions, as well as unlikely
• Evaluate interruptions in terms of severity
  – Minor
  – Moderate
  – Severe
  – Catastrophic
What About Your Organization?

• What types of business interruptions are likely in your organization?
• Which interruptions are unlikely, but still possible?
• Can you rank the interruptions in order of severity?
Determine Essential Business Functions

• What business activities and functions are essential for your organization?
• Who performs these activities and functions?
• Are there written protocols and procedures for these activities and functions?
Examples of Essential Functions

- Finance
- Donor and public relations
- Client services
- IT
- Payroll
What About Your Organization?

- What are the essential business functions?
- Are the activities and protocols for these functions documented?
- Have staff been cross-trained within operational functions?
Typical Plan Protocols

- Evacuation of staff, clients, and visitors
- Communication with stakeholders
- Public relations and media contact
- Client services
- Alternative work and service delivery sites
- Staff status, availability, and notification, including emergency contact information
- Protection of paper-only records
Additional Typical Protocols

• Financial
  – Funds, donations and revenue
  – Insurance coverage, claims procedures, loss documentation
  – Use of credit
  – Check writing and monitoring
  – Fund transfers and wiring
  – Security of confidential transaction and other codes
What About Your Organization?

• Which protocols would be important for your organization?
• Which, of any, of these protocols have been developed and documented?
Things to Consider

• Development of remote access to data files
• Identification of resource needs for business resumption and where they can be obtained quickly
• Have staff and managers developed a personal/home plan?
• Creation of partnerships for support
Keeping the Plan Alive

• “Desk-top” simulation
• Actual simulation of a business-interruption scenario
• Employee orientation
• Ongoing practice and critique
• Continuous refinement of plan
Business Continuity Project

- Funding from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation
- Demonstration Project
- 50 nonprofit organizations
  - 25 located in the Bay Area on the West Coast
  - 25 located in the mid-Atlantic area of the East Coast
Questions and Discussion
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