

BUY IN

Discussions about the Buy In category focused on all levels of buy in (departmental, management, and executives) for all different areas of the plan and program build and maintenance process.

Hurdles

- No time.
- No money.
- No resources.
- Lack of knowledge.
- The “that’s not my problem” attitude.
- Why do we need to do this if we have insurance?

Solutions

- Use education and awareness programs to explain risks.
- Talk about real life case studies.
- Add BCP to employee performance reviews.
- Integrate BCP into existing processes and procedures.
- Use workflow tools to help automate the BCP process.
- Use the existence of regulators to gain buy in.
- Leverage the BIA to demonstrate the cost of not doing BCP.
- Use audits as a reason to implement and maintain BCP.
- Know how to speak to Senior Executives to ensure engagement.
- The program shows good will to clients.
- Acknowledge the challenges.

YOUR PLAN

Discussions about Your Plan were broad in scope, focusing on the Business Impact Analysis (BIA), plan structure, plan writing, and different mitigation and recovery strategies used in the plan itself. The plan may refer to BCP's, DRP's, or crisis/incident/emergency response management plans.

Hurdles

- Providing the BIA questions in an acceptable, easy to understand format.
- How much content to include in the BIA and the plan; deep or shallow?
- Appropriate levels of participation and understanding to complete the BIA process.
- Working in silos.
- Actually executing the plan, plan navigation, and who has access to it.
- Lack of notifications or alerts.
- Which industry standards to hold to, and lack of common definitions.
- The scale and upkeep of vendor management.
- Compliance requirements.
- Continuous company reorganization that does not allow the BCP process to move forward.
- Not all strategies will work in all scenarios.

Solutions

- Organize the BCP according to a standard; use it for the Table of Contents.
- Explaining and understanding the scope of integration.
- Agree upon a Glossary of Terms.
- Use past pain points within the company to help move forward.
- Create policy for a set of internal standards.
- Use Executive level buy in to move the process forward.
- Use a standard list of processes for the BIA.
- Have IT at the table throughout the BIA and plan build process.
- Pre-populate BIA questions with options to choose from; keep it simple.
- Ensure decision makers are at the BIA table.
- Run the BIA as a workshop and use a standardized methodology.
- Get sign off to keep everyone accountable.
- Put vendor contact info in plan and ensure contracts have BCP clauses in place.
- Keep focus on key functions of facility, staff, technology, and suppliers.

YOUR PLAN CONTINUED

Discussions about Your Plan were broad in scope, focusing on the Business Impact Analysis (BIA), plan structure, plan writing, and different mitigation and recovery strategies used in the plan itself. The plan may refer to BCP's, DRP's, or crisis/incident/emergency response management plans.

Solutions Continued

- Keep content engaging, relatable and easy to understand.
- Work together as partners to achieve goals.
- Ensure BIA questions are valid.
- Centralize where information is stored.
- Write plans so they can be understood by almost anyone.
- Use associated timeframes in the plan to keep task management on track.
- Use additional resources like ready.gov and getprepared.ca.
- Use the 3-binder rule: a binder for regulators, a pamphlet for employees carrying out the plan, a business card for everyone.
- Use tools that sync to keep information up to date.
- Simplify plans for ease of use and maintenance.
- Use employee incentives for participation and completion.
- Leverage backup coordinators for the plan – don't do it alone!

TRAINING AND EXERCISING

Discussions about Training and Maintenance included various aspects of employee training and awareness. In addition, all phases of plan exercising including the type of exercises, who to include, when to conduct, and with what resources were addressed.

Hurdles

- Participation and engagement.
- Not enough time and conflicting priorities.
- At site, long training sessions and short attention spans.
- Training and exercise objectives are not clear.
- Limited money in the budget.
- Lack of motivation for the test.
- Selecting meaningful, applicable scenarios.

Solutions

- Plan for training and exercising in the budget.
- Make training and exercising mandatory through policy.
- Establish training and exercising schedules; plan a road map.
- Use e-training solutions. Videos can help to explain the process.
- Incorporate alternate site locations in exercises.
- Make training sessions short and effective, and schedule them more often.
- Eliminate the pass/fail or success factor.
- Adjust training to suit the needs of the business unit.
- Incorporate training into the onboarding process for new hires.
- Do surprise testing, start time not preplanned. Aside from the organizers, don't tell the participants the scenario ahead of the exercise.
- Use the 'train the trainer' approach for improved effectiveness.
- Use post mortems to identify and address gaps.
- Ensure you know your target audience so you can tailor programs accordingly.
- Avoid false positives; don't just tick a box, truly run the exercise.
- Training and exercising are complimentary and can be done at the same time.
- Use post-exercise reporting to executives to ask for additional resources.

TRAINING AND EXERCISING CONTINUED

Discussions about Training and Maintenance included various aspects of employee training and awareness. In addition, all phases of plan exercising including the type of exercises, who to include, when to conduct, and with what resources were addressed.

Solutions Continued

- Break down the silos and get the right people at the table.
- Form test planning committees.
- Use a 'self-serve' education format.
- Include other departments as subject matter experts.
- Use third parties for a fresh perspective.

MAINTENANCE

Discussions regarding Maintenance included all aspects of both plan and program maintenance.

Hurdles

- Regular, every day change within the organization that necessitates changes to the BCP. Change Management.
- Every time you use the plan it needs to be reviewed.
- Determining which plans are fluid vs static and what parts of the fluid sections need maintaining.
- Information is stored in multiple locations.
- How to ensure production changes are reflected in DR environment and processes?
- People that have the knowledge leave the organization.

Solutions

- Keep lines of communication open.
- Conduct status checks; i.e. organizational change may mean change in delegation.
- Rotate the person who is responsible for plan maintenance on a yearly basis.
- Incorporate into existing change management program (or implement one).
- Include in performance reviews.
- Use a change record for DR environment and processes.
- Accountability of supervisor helps to instill accountability in employees.
- Take responsibility for (and ownership of) the process.
- Use governing bodies/regulations/standards to ensure maintenance is completed.
- Make the plan easy to update.
- Properly map out dependencies to ease maintenance/upkeep.
- Structure the plan so that it has fluid and static sections, then review the fluid ones more frequently.
- Incorporate BCP maintenance succession planning.