

Continuity, Disaster and Crisis Plans

Bad things happen. When those things impact your organization's ability to function, having an established plan is the best way to get back on track quickly.

Crisis, continuity, and disaster recovery plans all focus on what to do when there is a business interruption.

A Business Interruption is any event, from natural disaster to infectious disease, to terrorism attack, to cyber-attack, that compromises your ability to meet your mission through normal daily procedures.

In most cases a business interruption will have three phases:

1. **Crisis:** An event has happened or is happening and you're working to make it through the crisis.
2. **Emergency Management:** You've made it through the initial crisis and are providing mission critical services, but probably not with the normal business processes.
3. **Recovery:** The crisis has passed, and you are focused on "putting things back together."

You need to know what the priorities are in any phase. If you don't have electricity or internet connectivity, restoring your data from a backup will drop in immediate importance. How business critical is your data? Is getting a generator to power your server necessary to provide those mission critical services. Then it would jump to the top.

There are three types of plans that are commonly used. Each plan will have some overlap with the others and often they are rolled into one master plan containing all the information.

A CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN is about planning for that immediate "what are we going to do" moment when a crisis hits. The focus is to survive the crisis in progress, and to minimize the effects of the crisis as much as possible. If all communications are down and you are heavily reliant on data from a server how will you provide services to that person standing in front of you at this moment?

A BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN (BCP) is broader and more focused on prevention of loss of critical services or immediate restoration of those services. It is designed to proactively identify



what needs to happen in order for your organization to continue to function after any kind of disruption.

A Business Continuity Plan:

- Ensures the continuous delivery of critical services, which permits the organization to recover its facility, data and assets.
- Identifies resources to support business continuity.

A DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN is focused on recovery following a disaster. It is usually more internally focused and tends to be seen as an IT function. It's about getting your data and systems back up and running.

