

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING SELF-ASSESSMENT



Every business is at risk of disruption – this can range from natural disasters such as flooding, wildfires and severe weather to man-made crises like data breaches, supply chain disruptions and loss of staff or equipment.

Although you can't prepare for every possible disruption, it's still important to identify potential issues your business may face.

By thinking about possible scenarios and the impact they would have on your business, you can help to prepare yourself and build resilience.

If you don't have a business continuity plan, this short 10 minute self-assessment will help to outline the issues you need to consider, to enable you to prepare for an emergency that may disrupt your business. If you do have a plan, then it may help you to identify any issues you may not have considered.

Help us to help you by completing this self-assessment to see if your business is resilient and prepared for disruption.

IS YOUR BUSINESS RESILIENT?



Business Continuity 10 MINUTE ASSESSMENT



The aim of this assessment is to highlight areas of your business where you can prepare for an emergency that may disrupt your business.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Have you considered the impact of direct risks on your business? (IT failure, equipment failure, loss of power, fire, staff absence, supply chain failure etc.)	☐	☐	☐
Have you considered the impact of external risks? (Theft, flood, fire from a neighbouring property, denial of access to your property)	☐	☐	☐

Personnel

Personnel are probably the greatest asset and investment your business possesses. During times of disruption, staff may need to lead or carry out many of the tasks required.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you have a list of all your employee's telephone numbers?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have a list of all your key contacts telephone numbers?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have all your staff's personal information, such as next of kin details including temporary and contract workers?	☐	☐	☐
Are these details held in more than one secure location (preferably one off site)?	☐	☐	☐

Personnel during a disruption

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do all your staff know who is in charge during a crisis and how to contact them?	☐	☐	☐
Do all your staff know what to do in an incident; have you shared the plan?	☐	☐	☐
Have your staff been assigned specific roles in the event of disruption?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have an out of hours contact procedure for staff and key contacts?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have staff with first aid or medical training?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have alternative working arrangements – work from home, second premises, etc?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have any staff with critical skills that carry out specific tasks in your business; do other staff know how to carry out these tasks?	☐	☐	☐

Buildings

Buildings are usually the greatest physical asset of any business.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you have a fire risk assessment?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have a floor/site plan for your building?	☐	☐	☐
Are the plumbing, heating and air conditioning systems checked/serviced on a regular basis?	☐	☐	☐
Do you carry out end of day checks after everybody has left the building?	☐	☐	☐
Do you ensure that all appliances are turned off?	☐	☐	☐
Do you check that all doors and windows are locked?	☐	☐	☐

Building facilities during a disruption

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you have a list of key contacts for building/equipment maintenance – electricity, gas, water, telephones, lifts, etc?	☐	☐	☐
Are you and your staff familiar with the location of mains switches and valves?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have fire safety procedures and do you have regular fire drills?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have an evacuation procedure for your building and are your staff trained and familiar with it?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have primary and secondary evacuation points?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have generator backups?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have an alternative location you could use during a crisis?	☐	☐	☐

Company equipment

Many businesses rely on specialist equipment or vehicles.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you have someone who is accountable for assets in your business?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have controls over the movement of company equipment?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have a regular inventory of your equipment?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have current maintenance contracts for your equipment?	☐	☐	☐

Security

Internal and external security is important. Theft, malicious damage, etc., can all affect the ability of your business to function. Simple measures can be put in place to improve security and awareness.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you have a security system installed?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have a security policy?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have an entry and exit procedure policy for staff/visitors/customers/contractors?	☐	☐	☐
Are contractors fully checked (company as well as each individual)?	☐	☐	☐
Do you check references fully?	☐	☐	☐
Do you regularly check the integrity of external fences, gates and doors?	☐	☐	☐
Does anyone else have access to your property/site?	☐	☐	☐

Paper documents

As with electronic data it is important to protect data held in hard copy. This data is vulnerable to fire, flood, theft, loss, etc.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you copy, scan or back-up your information?	☐	☐	☐
Do you store paper copies in fire and flood-proof lockable containers?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have copies at an off-site location?	☐	☐	☐
Is someone responsible for the upkeep of your files & accounts?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have a clear desk policy?	☐	☐	☐

Information technology

IT is central to many businesses and threats to computers and systems are well known. It is important that staff are informed of any dangers and any systems to protect your IT.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Is IT critical to your business?	☐	☐	☐
Do you regularly back-up your information?	☐	☐	☐

Continued over

Information technology continued

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you hold a copy of the back-up off site?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have IT maintenance staff or maintenance contracts?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have and have you tested an IT disaster recovery plan?	☐	☐	☐
Is your antivirus software up to date?	☐	☐	☐
Are computer errors and logs monitored?	☐	☐	☐
Are there IT security policies and procedures in place?	☐	☐	☐
Are all staff aware of email and internet usage policies? Are mobile phones and devices included?	☐	☐	☐
Do you know how many platforms/servers/applications or operating systems support critical business functions?	☐	☐	☐
Is your system part of a larger network?	☐	☐	☐
Do you know how long it would take to recover IT functions?	☐	☐	☐
Are laptops, memory sticks and mobile phones password encrypted?	☐	☐	☐

Suppliers and customers

Disruption to suppliers or customers could affect your business. Assessing the risk and putting procedures in place could minimise the effect of disruptions.

Good communications with your suppliers/customers will enable you to respond better in a crisis.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you have the correct contact details for your suppliers and customers?	☐	☐	☐
Are these details held securely in more than one location, preferably off-site?	☐	☐	☐
Have you seen your key suppliers business continuity plans? (They may require you to have a plan)	☐	☐	☐
Do their plans require you to reduce or increase your business in response to crisis?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have key customers that you would need to be in constant contact with during a crisis?	☐	☐	☐
If one of your key suppliers or customers went out of business would it affect your business?	☐	☐	☐

Location

Is your business part of a complex, is it near an industrial estate, on a flood plain, etc?

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Have you considered the types of risk that might occur due to the actions/ operations of other businesses located nearby? i.e. risk of pollution, etc?	☐	☐	☐
Have you thought about risks associated with the environment? i.e. water, climate?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have regular contact with neighbouring businesses? i.e. local business forum?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have contact details for the local businesses in your area?	☐	☐	☐

Insurance

Premiums may be reduced if you can demonstrate robust business continuity plans.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Do you have sufficient insurance to pay for disruption to business? i.e. cost of repairs, hire of temporary staff, lease of temporary accommodation and equipment?	☐	☐	☐
Do you have copies of insurance details in more than one location to enable you to contact them immediately when disruption occurs?	☐	☐	☐
Can you reduce your premiums by having a plan or putting any measures in place to reduce the risk of disruption such as flood barriers?	☐	☐	☐

Continued over

Business continuity emergency crash pack

It is worth considering assembling a crash pack to hold items needed in a crisis. It should contain enough information and equipment to start the recovery for your business. It needs to be easily accessible and ideally replicated in an off-site location.

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Business recovery plan	☐	☐	☐
Fire procedure	☐	☐	☐
Employee contact details	☐	☐	☐
Key suppliers contact details	☐	☐	☐
Contact details for key customers	☐	☐	☐
Site plan	☐	☐	☐
Laptop and charger	☐	☐	☐
Fire plans and contact details for the emergency services	☐	☐	☐
Contact details for key services i.e. IT, phones, power etc	☐	☐	☐

	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
First aid kit	☐	☐	☐
Mobile phones with credit and chargers	☐	☐	☐
Camera and spare batteries	☐	☐	☐
Torch	☐	☐	☐
Tape measure	☐	☐	☐
Whiteboard and pens	☐	☐	☐
Spare keys for buildings and vehicles	☐	☐	☐
Stationery including message pads, pens, pencils	☐	☐	☐
Megaphone if your business covers a large site	☐	☐	☐

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

Now you have completed your business self-assessment, you are ready to write your Business Continuity Plan. The information gathered when completing this assessment checklist will help to identify areas to be addressed in your plan.

A business continuity plan combines all the information from the checklist to give an overview of how your business responds to a crisis. It outlines the responsibilities and actions of your staff and highlights the risks most likely to affect the business.

By testing the plan, staff can become familiar with what may be required and give input to improvements that may benefit the business. Ongoing monitoring and review of your plan will ensure that changes to staff, suppliers or external factors can be included.

- Step 1 – Analyse your business
- Step 2 – Assess the risks
- Step 3 – Develop your strategy
- Step 4 – Review your plan
- Step 5 – Train your staff
- Step 6 – Exercise/test your plan

Having a business continuity plan strengthens the business and can make it more productive by identifying weaknesses in the organisation and areas for improvement. Many customers will only deal with a business which has a robust business continuity plan. By making sure that your key customers and suppliers have business continuity plans of their own you are protecting your business.

Bognor Regis in West Sussex experienced some severe flooding in November 2023 which left many businesses needing to activate their business continuity plans and being denied access to their buildings for many months.

Every year local businesses are denied access to their premises due to fire, flood, police incidents, etc.

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

Reducing the risk of fire to your business can begin by having a suitable and sufficient Fire Risk Assessment of your premises. This is a legal duty which should be undertaken by a responsible person under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Details can be found below.

[Fire safety advice for businesses](#)

[Fire safety: guidance for those with legal duties](#)

There are many sources of information to help you with the planning process and some links to useful sites are included below.

[West Sussex County Council](#)

[Sussex Resilience Forum](#)

[Community Risk Register](#)

[Business Continuity Institute](#)