Every Business Should Have A Plan.

Preventing Makes Good Business Sense.

How quickly your company can get back to business after a terrorist attack or tornado, a fire or flood often depends on emergency planning done today. While the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is working hard to prevent terrorist attacks, the regular occurrence of natural disasters demonstrates the importance of being prepared for any emergency. While recognizing that each situation is unique, your organization can be better prepared if it plans carefully, puts emergency procedures in place, and practices for all kinds of emergencies. 

This guide outlines common sense measures business owners and managers can take to start getting ready. A commitment to planning today will help support employees, customers, the community, the local economy and even the country. It also protects your business investment and gives your company a better chance for survival.

Every business should have a plan. Get ready now.

Plan to Stay in Business

Business continuity planning must account for both man-made and natural disasters. You should plan in advance to manage any emergency. Be prepared to assess the situation, use common sense and available resources to take care of yourself, your co-workers and your business' recovery.

Continuity Planning: Risk assessment can be a sophisticated area of expertise that ranges from self-assessment to an extensive engineering study. Your organization’s risk needs will vary according to the specific industry, size, scope and location of your individual company. Start by reviewing your business process flow chart, if one exists, to identify operations critical to survival and recovery. Carefully assess your internal and external functions to determine which staff, materials, procedures and equipment are absolutely necessary to keep the business operating. You should also establish procedures for succession of management.

Include co-workers from all levels in planning and as active members of the emergency management team. Make a list of your most important customers and proactively plan ways to serve them during and after a disaster. Also identify key suppliers, shippers, resources and other businesses you must interact with on a daily basis. A disaster that shuts down a key supplier can be devastating to your business.

Plan what you will do if your building, plant or store is not accessible. Talk with your staff or co-workers and frequently review and practice what you intend to do during and after an emergency. Just as your business changes over time, so do your preparedness needs. Review and update your plans at least annually and inform your employees of the changes.

Emergency Planning for Employees: Your employees and co-workers are your business’ most valuable asset. Two-way communication is central before, during and after a disaster. Include emergency information in newsletters, on your company intranet, in periodic employee emails and/or other communication tools. Designate an...
Keep copies of important records such as site maps, bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation. Airborne chemical hazards and moist towelettes, garbage, first aid kit, whistle, wrench or pliers to turn off utilities, radio with an alert function, extra batteries, a flashlight, hand. Recommended emergency supplies include: water, essential medications. Talk to your co-workers about what everyone to have a portable emergency supply kit custom.

Survival: Fresh water, food, clean air and warmth. Encourage employees with disabilities or special needs, ask them what they require. They may or may not immediately out of town phone number where employees can leave an “I’m okay” message in a catastrophic disaster. If you have employees with disabilities or special needs, ask them what assistance, if any, they require.

Emergency Supplies: When preparing for emergency situations, it’s best to think first about the basics of survival: fresh water, food, clean air and warmth. Encourage everyone to have a portable emergency supply kit custom.

Make sure to have your personal sanitation. Airborne chemical hazards and moist towelettes, garbage, first aid kit, whistle, wrench or pliers to turn off utilities, radio with an alert function, extra batteries, a flashlight, hand. Recommended emergency supplies include: water, essential medications. Talk to your co-workers about what everyone to have a portable emergency supply kit custom.

Emergency Supplies: When preparing for emergency situations, it’s best to think first about the basics of survival: fresh water, food, clean air and warmth. Encourage everyone to have a portable emergency supply kit custom.

In any emergency, local authorities may or may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, you should monitor television or radio news reports for information or official instructions as they become available.

Make an Evacuation Plan: Some disasters will require employees to leave the workplace quickly. The ability to evacuate workers, customers and visitors effectively can save lives.

If your business operates out of more than one location, establish evacuation procedures for each individual building. If your company is in a high-rise building, an industrial park, or even a small strip mall, it is important to coordinate and practice with other employees or businesses to avoid confusion and potential gridlock.

Make a Shelter-in-Place Plan: There may be situations when it’s best to stay where you are to avoid any uncertainty outside. There are other circumstances, such as during a tornado or chemical incident, when specifically how and where you take shelter is a matter of survival. You should understand the differences and plan for all possibilities.

Go to www.ready.gov for more specific information on these topics as well as when and how to “shelter-in-place” for protection from chemical contamination and steps to take for fire safety and medical emergencies.

Talk to Your People

Providing for your co-workers’ well-being is recognized as one of the best ways to assure your company’s recovery. That means communicating regularly with employees before, during and after an incident. Use newsletters, intranets, staff meetings and other internal communications tools to communicate emergency plans and procedures.

Practice the Plan with Co-workers: Frequently practice what you intend to do during a disaster. Conduct regularly scheduled education and training seminars to provide co-workers with information, identify needs and develop preparedness skills. Include disaster training in new employee orientation programs.

Promote Family and Individual Preparedness: If individuals and families are prepared, your company and your co-workers are better positioned in an emergency situation. Encourage your employees and their families to: get an emergency supply kit custom.

Protect Your Investment

In addition to emergency planning and communicating with employees, there are steps you can take to safeguard your company and secure your physical assets. Provide a Crisis Communication Plan: Detail how your organization plans to communicate with employees, local authorities, customers and others during and after a disaster. Include relevant information for employees, top company executives, the general public and your customers as well as local, state and federal authorities.

Support Employee Health After a Disaster: It is possible that your staff will need time to ensure the well-being of their family members, but getting back to work is important to the personal recovery of people who have experienced disasters. Workplace routines facilitate recovery by providing an opportunity to be active and to restore social contact. Re-establish routines, when possible. You may also want to consider offering professional counselors to help co-workers address their fears and anxieties.

Improve Cyber Security: Protecting your data and information technology systems may require specialized expertise, but even the smallest business can be better prepared. Use anti-virus software and keep it up-to-date. Don’t open email from unknown sources. Use hard-to-guess passwords. Protect your computer from Internet intruders by using firewalls. Back up your computer data and download security protection updates known as patches regularly. Subscribe to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security National Cyber Alert System, www.us-cert.gov, to receive free, timely alerts.

An investment in planning today will not only help protect your business investment and your livelihood, but will also support your employees, customers and stakeholders, the community, the local economy and even the country. Get ready now.