Introductory Business Continuity

Overview - What is Business Continuity?

Business Continuity is the activity performed by an organization to continue critical business functions in the event of any type of crisis. They can range from external ones such as extreme weather, terrorism or social unrest, disruptions, to utilities the supply chain or transit strikes to outages caused by human error, mismanagement, IT outages, or compliance violations. Crisis events are typically unavoidable and unforeseeable, and often sudden. Having a strong business continuity program in place is paramount.

Below are the high level steps required for an organization to properly engage in Business Continuity planning:

Identify: Risk Assessment

Analyze: Business Impact Analysis

Design: Strategy Selection

Execute: Plan Development and Execution

Measure: Plan Testing and Maintenance

What is Business Continuity planning?

Business Continuity planning is the act of creating viable protection plans that encompass all key functions and departments of a business. These plans script the response by the business to a potential disruption.

What is a Business Continuity plan?

A business continuity plan is a roadmap(s) for your business continuity program to follow to ensure that business operations are conducted in an acceptable and timely fashion under various crisis circumstances. The plans must cover personnel, internal and external dependencies, critical applications and critical business functions. Plans are usually made for each business unit or department.

The difference between Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery

Because "business continuity" and "disaster recovery" are similar in nature, the two terms are often married under one acronym, "BC/DR". However, there are important differences to consider. Business

continuity planning is involved with developing a proactive plan to maintain critical business functions during the time of a crisis so the business can continue to run at an acceptable minimum level and with or without normal office space, IT services or regular staff. Disaster recovery most often refers to IT plans that define the set of actions to take in order to restore technology systems, recover data or repair physical infrastructure. For this reason, business continuity is commonly associated with business operations and employee actions, whereas disaster recovery is more concerned with reverting the business's informational technology system back to normal.