

BUSINESS CONTINUITY TEST TEMPLATE

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1 Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this test document is to facilitate test planning, test execution, test review, and corrective action to plans developed for <Client> location(s).

This document can be considered a “baseline” throughout the phases of the exercising process, independent of the type of exercising being performed.

2 Document Change Control History

This document will be updated as necessary throughout the course of pre-test planning, test execution, and post-test review.

Enter the version, issue, date issued and description of the document.

The version number (left-most digit) indicates the phase of the test report document (1=Pre-Test 2=Test, 3=Post-Test, 4=Final-Report).

The issue number (right-most digit) will be incremented by one whole digit if there is a need to re-issue this document due to a major change or update within a phase.

Version and Issue	Date Issued (MM/DD/YYYY)	Phase and Version Description
1-1		Pre-test version of this document, for use during pre-test planning meeting(s)
2-1		Test version of this document, for use during exercising
3-1		Post-test version of this document, for use at the post-test review meeting(s)
4-1		Final version of this document, with a completed corrective action plan

3 Pre-Test

3.1 Test Planning Background

This test is in support of the <Client> <Plan name> test program.

3.2 Pre-Test Planning Meeting(s)

Pre-test planning meeting(s) must be scheduled sufficiently in advance of the desired exercising date for the specific BC plan(s) of interest.

Select planners (e.g., the Test Planning Team) and any other parties deemed necessary for the construction of the desired type and scope of BCP test should attend pre-test planning meetings.

The meeting(s) may be conducted face-to-face, by teleconference, or by other electronic means (e.g., e-mail, net meeting).

4 Test

4.1 Scope of Test

4.1.1 Scheduled Date and Time of Test

Start Date/Time	Finish Date / Time

4.1.2 Type of Test

Highlight Box Indicating Test Being Conducted
Orientation Test
Drill
Tabletop Test
Functional Test
Full Scale Test

4.1.3 Plans to be tested

BC Plan Name(s)	Scope of Execution

4.1.4 Test Goals

Enter a brief and clearly stated goal of what you want the test to accomplish. Test goals and objectives drive the test and keep the process on track.

Goal(s)

4.1.5 Test Objectives

Clear, measurable objectives should be defined here. Write at least 3-5 overall objectives. There may be additional objectives for a specific function of the Local Incident Response Team, a department or location.

4.1.5.1 Objectives Defined

- Establish the direction of the test
- Control the direction of the messages

- Narrow the scope of the test plan
- Keep the test and participants on track
- Are used to evaluate the test
- Help to identify follow-up needs, improvements and to-do lists

4.1.5.2 Writing Objectives

- Simple
- Concise
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Realistic and challenging
- Task-oriented (oriented to specific business functions)

Objectives

4.2 Execution Scenario

4.2.1 Test Basic Premises

Equipment, procedures, standard operating procedures or conditions needed to conduct the test but exist only for the purpose of the test need to be defined here.

Examples:

-
- Change the date, the time, and put people on vacation and make them not available.
- The only valid phone numbers are those listed in the communications directory.

No.	Test Basic Premises
1	
2	
3	
4	

4.2.2 Test Execution Assumptions

Design criteria that further define the scope of the test by placing assumed limits on the participants are described here. These answers address questions that often hold up the test. Examples:

-
- The telephone systems are operating normally.
- All employees who are “supposed to come to work” show up.

No.	Assumptions
1	
2	
3	
4	

4.2.3 Test Scenario

The event or incident scenario for this test can be as simple as a basic technology disruption or as complex as a simulated, major crisis event.

- This section prepares participants for the test
- This is the overview of the event, the beginning of the process
- Describe the environment at the time of the test
- Provide necessary background information
- Launch the event – is it realistic?
- Discovery – how do you find out?
- Details: time, location, extent of damage
- Sequence of events
- Initial damage report, if possible
- Weather conditions
- Where are we in the timeline of response and recovery?
- Who is missing? Who is there?
- Are there injuries? Fatalities?
- What communication has taken place?
- Leave nothing to assume – this just creates chaos with the participants

Example:

“A Fire has broken out in the main office building that is attached to the main production building. You do not know the status of your buildings or contents”

Seg	Planned Date & Time	Actual Date & Time	Message Content	Delivery Method	Delivered By
A					
B					
C					
D					
E					
F					
G					
H					

Seg	Planned Date & Time	Actual Date & Time	Message Content	Delivery Method	Delivered By
I					
J					
K					
L					
M					
N					
O					
P					
Q					
R					
S					
T					
U					
V					
W					
X					
Y					
Z					

4.3 Instructions to Participants

Describe here what you expect of the test participants. Explain decisions and actions to simulators as if they were the “real” people. Simulators are reality (e.g., Imagine if you will...). Explain that the test is not a “fault-finding” activity. Explain time outs – and how that would work. Also discuss the fact that there will be mistakes. Be sure to note that the more mistakes, the better, as learning comes from making mistakes. Example:

- This is a training test designed to assess existing plans and procedures as a tool to manage a corporate headquarters response. It is understood that plans are always evolving and are not “perfect”. Questions regarding the test should be directed to the test facilitator.
- The test design team has designed the situations to be as realistic as possible. If we have missed the mark, work through the problem to the best of your ability. The value is in the process, the dialogue, and the experience.
- Actions and decisions should be consistent with your existing plans.
- Stay in the role the entire time. Don’t get into the future; stay in the moment.

4.4 Communications Directory

The directory should be published separately, and included here. It should contain the phone numbers, fax numbers, and/or email addresses of those with whom the participants are likely to have to call. These numbers, of course, will be for phones in the Simulation Room. This closes the communication loop. Don’t forget to assign the Jack and Jill of all trades. The directory is the last piece to be done prior to the test.

Name	Cell Phone Number
Team members	
Call Trees	
Vendors	
Others	

4.5 Messages

Messages drive the test, expose unresolved issues, and address the objectives. They add information to describe the disaster environment and/or situation. Messages stimulate action by the participants. Messages can escalate an initial (primary) problem and create secondary or tertiary problems. Example:

4.5.1 Messages should influence action at least one of four ways

- Verification – information gathering
- Consideration – discussion, consultation
- Deferral – place on a priority list
- Decision – deploy or deny resources

4.5.2 Message component examples

- Time – what time is it to be delivered within the test?
- Who – who is the source of the message?
- Mode – how was the message transmitted?
- To Whom – who is the recipient?
- What – is the content of the message?
- Acting tips – helpful to note expected action/reaction and acting tips

4.5.3 Message sources

- Pre-scripted messages provide the story line of the test; they also deliver or announce important information
- Incident response team members
- Simulators in an effort to stress a particular issue

4.5.4 Message delivery

- Phone
- Two-way radio
- Fax
- Email
- Radio broadcast
- Video
- Runner
- Actor playing a role

4.5.5 Message examples

- “This is the security guard at the main desk. There is a strong smell of gas in the lobby. What should I do?”
- “This is the floor warden on the 22nd floor. Employees are asking if they should go home or stay. Is there any food or water here at work if we have to spend the night?”

4.5.6 Message tracking

- Keep messages and related test information on a spreadsheet so that you can sort them by location, date, time, or type of event
- Have 4-5 key messages that speak directly to the objectives that you will have passed by the evaluators and simulation room for resolution
- If messages are not adequately or properly resolved, keep the message alive
- Note key messages on the spreadsheet by using bold font.

5 Participants

5.1 Test facilitator

The test facilitator must be familiar with the BC plan being tested, ideally independent of both the BC plan developers and standing team members. The facilitator coordinates the test’s execution scenario and provides spontaneous input to the test. This helps plan execution throughout the test scope. The facilitator is in charge of all test elements, provides oversight to the process, and is the final arbiter.

Test Facilitator Name

5.1.1 On Test Day

- Review all the major points – timelines, key messages, contact information at all facilities
- Have an assistant if possible
- Cell, pager and landline numbers should be available to reach you
- Facilitators should not get into active problem solving; their job is to delegate and encourage the participants

5.2 Test Assistant

A test assistant supports the facilitator, especially during large and complex tests.

Test Assistant Name

5.2.1 On Test Day

- Name cards need to be distributed to those who cannot participate until later
- Radio announcements (and other audio/video media) need to be planned and recorded in advance and cued for playback
- Have lunch available at 11:30 am and brought into the room before 11:45
- Check in with the facilitator frequently
- Play any media as required in the test plan, e.g., video, radio broadcast.
- Hand out the participant evaluations
- Assist with the debriefing

5.3 Test Design Team

The following individuals are involved in designing and planning the test:

Design Team Members

5.4 Simulation Team Members

Design team members make great simulation team members. In-depth knowledge of the organization and departments being tested is a key requirement. STMs should have a positive good attitude and good acting skills. They need to be able to produce “credible scenarios” and yet stay on course with the test plan. Most of all they need to be team players.

Simulation Team Members

5.4.1 Simulation Team Guidelines

- Know the test plan and the messages
- Know where the test is going
- Know your resources
- Know your messages
- Follow instructions from the simulation coordinator
- Provide realistic time frames to callers
- Use spontaneous yet realistic messages
- Deliver messages at the stated time
- React convincingly to the message recipient’s comments
- Ensure that key messages are kept active until they have been addressed
- The simulation coordinator monitors messages and keeps the simulation team on track
- Respond to participants’ requests and actions
- Repeat information if asked
- Stay on track with the script and objectives
- Keep the simulation room scribe informed on impromptu stories
- Report issues to the simulation room coordinator
- If a phone is used, answer it with, “May I help you?”

- Keep the test plan and messages in a binder, and highlight your assigned messages
- Keep notes on what you said to everyone
- Be at the test early
- Don't offer to call anyone back; place the responsibility on test participants. You will be too busy with other calls to keep calling them back.
- Remember you are in control of calls. Don't let the caller determine how it is handled.
- Try and avoid delivering something in writing
- When following up on a message the team did not complete, and they state it was fixed, challenge them to validate their claims
- When callers into the simulation room demand more information than is necessary or available, state that you don't have any more information

5.4.2 Simulation Room

- The simulation room should be located near the test room, but far enough away where occupants cannot be heard
- Have a sufficient number of phones
- Have white boards or flip charts for scribes to note the current status
- Key messages need to be noted for tracking
- The room needs to have adequate room and wall space

5.4.3 Simulation Team Orientation

- Review test plan and key messages
- Plot the strategy for escalation
- Provide any necessary background information that the players will need
- Provide a names list
- Facilitate roles such as scribes and message runners

5.4.4 On Test Day

- Once the test is underway, stay in your assigned role as much as possible
- Check with the simulation team coordinator if you have any questions

5.5 Test Evaluators

Evaluators need to understand the plan and test. They must understand the business and processes being tested, and be observant and objective. They should attend pre-test briefing, test and post-test review meetings.

Test Evaluator Name

5.5.1 Test Evaluator Role

- Monitor test play
- Evaluate actions, not players
- Determine if the objectives and related actions are being met

- Identify problems to the facilitator
- Track key messages and report findings to facilitator

5.5.2 What to Evaluate

- Test objectives – the evaluation form should have each objective written on one page with the evaluator commenting on his/her observations related to that objective.
- Evaluate expected player outcomes
- Track key messages
- Provide objective comments and recommendations

5.5.3 Evaluator Activities

- Attend the pre-test briefing
- Assist in the development of evaluation form
- Review and know the test plan
- Know the objectives, narrative and messages
- Know the test organization
- Report early to the test
- Be positioned near intake phones so you will see where messages go and how they are handled
- If messages are not addressed, notify the simulation team so they can remind the test team.
- If key messages are lost, advise the simulation team coordinator so the message can be resent
- Assign certain messages to specific evaluators so they can track their progress.
- Note message processing on evaluator forms
- Evaluators should be assessing command, control, coordination, and communication activities

5.5.4 On Test Day

- Observe participants in key roles (chairs and directors)
- Examine situation boards and forms
- Examine reports
- Discuss issues with participants
- Attend briefings
- Follow key messages into crisis command center for handling

5.6 Test Participants

Test participants must be familiar with the BC plan being tested, and should specifically be named team members of the BC program. Individuals involved in executing plan sections and procedures are the following:

Test Participant Name	Comments

Test Participant Name	Comments

5.7 The Test Briefing

- Following completion of the test, the facilitator reviews the test plan with the participants and answers questions
- If possible, use audio-visuals to add realism
- At the briefing conclusion, give participants a few minutes to get ready

5.8 The Test Debriefing

- The purpose of the debriefing is:
 - To review and evaluate the test
 - To provide feedback
 - To review lessons learned from the test
- Obtain feedback from all participants on what worked and what didn't work
- Note issues of command, control, coordination, and communication
- Have each function chair report on their group
- Evaluators and simulation team members share their observations
- Test facilitator facilitates the session
- The best time for a debriefing is immediately after the test
- Ask two key questions: What worked? What didn't work?
- Simulation team members and evaluators should also debrief to capture their observations and lessons learned for sharing with the test team

5.9 Written Evaluations

- Test participants should evaluate the perceived value of the test and their overall reaction to the experience
- They should evaluate the existing plan
- They should evaluate the test
- They should identify the need for further training and tests
- They should make suggestions for improvement

5.10 Written Report

- The test facilitator should incorporate debriefing comments, evaluator observations and participant evaluations into a concise report of the event

including lessons learned, issues that need correction, next steps and additional training needed

- Complete the report within five working days of the test and distribute it to all participants

5.11 Keys to a Successful Test

- Top level support and involvement
- Test design team and volunteers
- Realistic test plan
- Thorough preparation and attention to detail
- Clear introduction and instructions
- Participant feedback at debriefing
- Follow-up

5.12 Suggested Test Schedule

Consider the following schedule if two tests are conducted on the same day:

4 weeks prior to test: Design team meets one hour per week

1 day prior to test:

1 hour meeting – Simulation team orientation

1 hour meeting – Assistant orientation

1 hour meeting – Evaluator orientation

Day of test:

9:00 am Test participant orientation

9:30 am Conduct test

10:30 am Break (as needed)

11:45 am Lunch and debriefing

1:00 pm Test complete

6 Test/Debrief Summary

The test took place on <date>. A total of <number> participants took part in the test. Out of <number> participants, <number> people responded to the written evaluation. Out of <number> participants, <number> people gave verbal feedback.

6.1 Written Evaluation Responses

6.1.1 Do you feel the test goal was achieved?

Yes –

No –

Comments:

6.1.2 Do you feel that you had the opportunity during the test to participate in at least one of the objectives?

Yes –

No –

No response –

6.1.3 If you answered YES, then which objective(s) did you participate in?

- Objective 1 –
- Objective 2 –
- Objective 3 –
- Objective 4 –
- None –

6.1.4 What did you like best about participating in this test?

-

6.1.5 When did you feel most uncomfortable and why?

-

6.1.6 Please reflect on the test and provide an honest opinion about what you have learned today.

-

6.1.7 If you have a written departmental or facility plan, do you feel your plan, as written today, will be adequate to recover your business functions?

- Yes –
- No –
- No response –

6.1.8 Additional comments

-

6.1.9 What worked properly?

-

6.1.10 What didn't work properly?

-

6.2 Verbal Evaluation

6.2.1 What worked?

-

6.2.2 What didn't work?

-

6.3 Recommendations for Improvement

Assistance for all the following items is provided through the <Client> business continuity program office. Examples, samples and other documentation that other business units have produced will be shared upon request.

No.	Description of Improvement	Responsible Party	Due Date	Completion Date
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				

7 Appendix A – Glossary

Term	Definition
Design Team	<p>The design team develops the test from start to finish. Members should have strong knowledge of the overall business. They should also have detailed knowledge in their area or department. The team usually has 3-7 members, more if needed. The design team is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative • Functional under pressure • Able to stay on schedule • Detail-oriented • Willing to challenge • Good at keeping secrets • Not participating in the test
Test	<p>An activity designed to promote emergency preparedness. The test examines the performance of duties, tasks and operations in a way similar to the way they would be performed in a real emergency.</p>
Orientation Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces participants to the plans and procedures • Introduce new plans or revise old plans • Requires no previous experience • Helps orient new staff or leadership • Planning cycle: one month • Test time: 60-90 minutes
Drill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test of individual emergency response functions • Involves actual field response • Practice or test under realistic conditions • Involve all levels of responders • Planning cycle: one month • Test time: 10-60 minutes • Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fire drill ○ Radio test ○ Tornado test ○ Earthquake test
Table Top Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The basic version seeks to solve problems in a group setting via brainstorming • Advanced table tops will introduce messages and test assistants who can answer questions • A more “reality-based” experience • Planning cycle: 2-3 months • Test time: 90-120 minutes

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debriefing time: 30 minutes
Functional Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assesses the allocation of resources and manpower • Evaluates communication across the different groups • Assesses the adequacy of current procedures and policies • Participants perform actual activities • Involves more participants: simulators, evaluators, larger design team • Introduces more advanced messages and other media • Test time: 90 min – 4 hours • Planning cycle: 3-6 months
Full-Scale Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluates the operational capability of systems in an interactive manner over a substantial period of time • Presents complex and detailed events in real-time • Mobilizes personnel and resources and movement of emergency response teams, equipment and resources • Can be expensive; may be disruptive to normal operations • Test time: 2-8 hours • Planning cycle: 4 months minimum

8 Appendix B – Record of Test Planning Meetings

Date of Meeting	Meeting Summary (Attach meeting minutes here)