

“Crack the Code”

Part 3 – Pandemic Planning – Structure & Content

We've learned from my earlier e-mails on the “Crack the Code” series that successful pandemic planning starts with an approach to effectively test and update your plan. If you're not able to sustain on-going changes to your pandemic plan, you will have no hope of sustaining operations during a pandemic.

There are a couple high level planning principals to keep in mind before we provide you the “keys” to cracking the code. In Business Continuity Planning there are five areas to address when planning; pandemic planning focuses on people, which is one of the five. The other areas include Technology, Facilities, Key Vendors, and Operations. These areas are important, because with Pandemic planning, people require assets, tools and other resources to perform their critical processes. Without access to them, your people will not be able to deliver services to clients.

I find that most organizations have little to no idea on where to start. We recommend the following:

First, the **structure** of the plan.

- Design a simple, practical plan using step by step templates, not a technical manual approach
- Develop your pandemic plan, activation steps and escalation actions to follow the World Health Organization (WHO) or Federal Government's progression of pandemic response stages
- Design your pandemic plan to follow the steps that you will actually take
- Focus on; who will work (people) what they will need to do their work (tools), where they will work (location) and how they will do their work (operation & vendors)
- Lastly, identify the critical processes that must be sustained and dismiss non-critical functions

Second, the **content** of the plan.

- Assign your pandemic response team (PRT), the meeting location and how you will meet
- Identify the responsibilities of the PRT
- Develop activation guidelines and steps following the WHO or Federal Government Stages
- Develop a Crisis Communication Plan, including a plan for how to reach all employees
- Develop action plans to sustain the critical processes, protect people & address the five areas;
 - (People) Access to only 30-40% of your people
 - (Technology) Secured access to technology, tools & information if not at

- work
 - (Facilities) Alternate work sites
 - (Operations) Alternative work processes
 - (Key Vendors) Access to key vendors (multiple options)
- Define the “work status” for each area of your organization during certain activations
- Address the following corporate issues at each stage of activation with simple policies; such as work status, visitation, travel, pay, information access, training, communication, illness at work, return to work, protection/prevention measures at work
- Documentation logs

It certainly helps to have good structure and content to follow when creating your plan. It is also important to make sure you have a defined approach for updating and testing the plan as we discussed previously. However, the real “key” to cracking the code to successful pandemic planning is simply getting started.

Please contact us now with any questions. Let us help you prepare and protect your people.

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