

## **Developing a Continuity Plan**

Many organizations have plans for coping with crisis and dealing with disruption. The real question is, “Will our plan really work when disaster strikes?” Short of creating a major disturbance of your own (like pouring a soft drink into the file server or spreading a mysterious white powder around the office), testing and exercising provide an effective means to evaluate your preparedness.

### **A Simple Guide for Developing a Continuity Plan (if you don’t already have one)**

1. Project Initiation
  - ▲ Define goals, objectives, scope, cost, and management
  - ▲ Select the Project Team
2. Risk Assessment
  - ▲ Identify threats & hazards
  - ▲ Determine the probability and impact
3. Impact Analysis
  - ▲ Identify critical functions and the infrastructure that supports them
  - ▲ Develop Recovery Time Objectives (RTO)
  - ▲ Determine weak links and critical paths
4. Emergency Response
  - ▲ Preserve life and personal safety
  - ▲ Evacuation or shelter in place strategy
  - ▲ Communication – internal and external
5. Recovery Strategies
  - ▲ What does it take to get “back to normal”?
6. Formal Plan Development
  - ▲ Write it all down
  - ▲ The layout should be easy to use
7. Training & Awareness
  - ▲ Make sure ALL stakeholders are aware and understand the plan
8. Exercise the Plan
  - ▲ Conduct regular drills and exercises
  - ▲ “What Would We Do If...?”
9. Keeping the Plan Current
  - ▲ Scheduled reviews and ongoing maintenance