Beyond the Myths of Disaster Preparedness

What If You Build It — But They Don’t Come?
Global Assurance

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Missouri public safety officials are acutely aware of the importance of coordinated, multi-agency response. The challenge came March 17 as rounds of heavy rainfall and thunderstorms pounded the nation’s central plains states. State officials were ready.

When the storms began, Missouri DPS implemented the latest version of an emergency management solution. The results were impressive as the state was able to see the first signs of flooding, navigating teams from hundreds of miles away. This also meant state officials were able to track federal assets, and record each incident within the emergency—from start to finish.

Natural disasters wait for no one to implement a solution. But in this case, the statewide tracking resource was deployed just prior to severe flooding, and fully deployed all levels of government, as well as the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

The solution worked so well that the state of Missouri was able to prepare for, and respond to, critical incidents during the disaster. This not only saved lives, but mitigated damage.

When Mother Nature really gets rolling, Missouri is often in the way. The state has 5.8 million residents, and in the last 10 years, they have endured 14 disasters that warranted presidential action. This includes ice storms, winter storms and floods. Now you can see why it’s important for the state to coordinate multi-agency response.

Missouri also should receive accolades from the emergency management community as it has improved existing methods for response and emergency management. The state has implemented the latest version of E Team as the cornerstone of its Missouri Emergency Response Information System. It is expected to streamline and integrate emergency response efforts statewide.

According to David Finch, Missouri DPS assistant director for homeland security, manual methods can be effective for emergency management if the incident is rather small, but the amount of information needed by public safety responders and managers at all levels is only possible by using technology.

Use of the E Team solution allows for a common interface and is easy to use for all participants in the MERIS program. It allows for emergency responders on all levels to foster better relationships while enhancing geographic information system capabilities without the need for more staff.

The solution works, and that’s enough for any emergency responder to give an endorsement. During flood recovery efforts, local- and state-level emergency managers were able to communicate more clearly. State residents also are protected because the solution runs across a secure platform of integrated functions, including reporting, resource management, action planning, notification and mapping.

Emergency situations seem to be happening more often and with greater severity not only in the United States, but worldwide. Good communication between all parties involved is critical and necessary. The state of Missouri has proven there is a better way to be prepared.
Beyond the Myths of Disaster Preparedness

Mastering the finer points of human crisis management

By Kristen R. Deuel, CBCP, CERT

Employee contribution at work is a key contributor to generating a positive perspective in the workplace. Organizations that actively engage all their employees in disaster preparation “are expected to see benefits in terms of job satisfaction, retention of employees, increased productivity and decreased health consequences,” said Dr. Ronald Schouten, M.D., JD.

As a result, involving employees in the development and implementation of continuity programs can not only improve an employee’s perspective, but also can hasten recovery of the overarching community by helping to protect against suffering, loss of income, and negative economic impact.

HUMAN PREPAREDNESS

In surveys conducted before and after Hurricane Katrina, the Center for Catastrophe Preparedness and Response discovered that 60 percent of Americans surveyed believe it is “impossible to be prepared for hurricanes, terrorist attacks or a flu epidemic,” at home. The workplace, however, offers a unique role in preparing working adults. One effective preparation plan can impact hundreds and even thousands of people at once.

Pre-event planning and training to mitigate the physical, psychological and economic impact of disasters at the workplace can reduce morbidity and mortality, and also can influence individual preparedness at home as well. In 1989,
behavioral responses to industrial disasters were studied and researchers reported that “an individual’s level of preparedness was the strongest predictor of an optimal outcome at the workplace.”

One incentive for implementing effective preparation plans for people within organizations, is that those that have engaged in prior planning perform better in actual emergencies than those that have not. In addition to increasing optimal behavior, proper planning will reduce stress by providing participants with a sense of control. And perceived control is associated with improved emotional well-being, either directly or indirectly through the reduction of fear.

Organizations that do not develop adequate disaster preparation for employees become passive victims of disaster. Then the key tasks of ensuring safety, accounting for employees, and managing evacuations while in crisis mode can be an unsuccessful feat. In a 2005 Disaster Preparedness Survey report, only 34 percent of organizational disaster recovery plans included preparations for employees, and only 57 percent of those surveyed indicated their disaster recovery plan was even communicated to workplace employees. A 2006 survey by the Society for Human Resource Management found that many disaster recovery plans are often not comprehensive enough to meet the needs of employees and the business in a time of crisis.

The reactions and needs of employees can vary and change over time, and like other elements of the business, a variety of situational factors may dramatically impact the employee recovery from crisis. Including social behavior in a workplace hazard and vulnerability analysis will help a disaster planner discover specific employee needs that must be planned.

Therefore, to ensure preparedness plans can meet human need, the onus is on the disaster planner to develop human resource hazard and vulnerability mitigation, ensure employee involvement during plan development, communicate the final product to employees and implement training and awareness as part of the plan.

In addition, the disaster planner must consider developing a preparedness program that takes into account varied employee health and safety needs, transportation to and from work, potential trauma, communication needs, payroll requirements and the ability to identify the myriad levels and status of employees’ safety situation.

**WARNINGS & EVACUATION**

During one recent decade, only 18 percent of the U.S. population had first-hand dealings with disaster. This matters, because much of a victim’s immediate response will tend to be based on previous experience, or lack thereof. Most citizens are disaster neophytes.

During evacuation from Hurricane Katrina, for example, some victims did not heed evacuation warnings due to their lack of first-hand knowledge of the consequences of such a disaster. Many survivors of the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks who evacuated in time had experienced the 1993 bombing of the Twin Towers; they knew evacuation was critical to survival.

Overall, people are reluctant to believe warnings when they are issued. People tend to be influenced by different elements of the warning process, based on their previous experience. Those who have experienced a particular type of disaster tend to pay more attention to the content of a warning involving that particular disaster agent, while those lacking that particular experience tend to place greater emphasis on the credibility of the agency issuing the warning.

**DISASTER RESPONSE MYTHS**

A disaster myth is essentially the discrepancy between response behavior believed to be true, and actual response behavior. Disaster planners and emergency managers can suffer significant repercussions by following mythical information as a foundation for response plans.

For example, one once commonly held view about evacuation and panic is that many victims in a disaster will exhibit a so-called blind-flight reaction, manifested by wild running about or otherwise disorganized hysterical behavior. Absence of judgment and logical thinking will be conspicuous. Such a person requires prompt and effective action, both to protect him from the consequences of his undirected behavior and to prevent his panic from spreading throughout the group.

Research has since debunked this myth. Blind flight is not nearly so common a reaction during evacuation as many people believe. Disaster planners should obtain and apply the best research to all of their response activity planning, to ensure that human response is most appropriately planned for. Table 1 describes the most commonly believed myths, and the research findings that debunk each one.

**HUMAN RECOVERY**

Disasters, by nature, require people to venture into the unknown and act quickly in a dynamic situation. Dealing with short- and long-term trauma caused by disaster or crisis is an instrumental part of returning the workplace and employees to normalcy as quickly as possible.

After the disaster has been contained and a damage assessment has been completed, disaster planners should develop a recovery plan that attends to employees’ physical and emotional states in anticipation of return to work. Understanding what stress-induced responses are, and what support services may be required, are critical components of a disaster recovery plan for the human element at work.

Employee trauma and tension also can be a side effect of a workplace crisis. Being able to help employees through and recovering from the trauma of disaster is a critical part of the disaster plan. Managers who are most familiar with the work habits and personalities of their employees can play a critical role in detecting difficulties and getting employees to accept help.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is another compelling reason for employers to provide some type of recovery support following disaster events. The confusion, frustration, fear and
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Myth</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Research Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evacuation Behavior</td>
<td>When warned of an impending threat like a hurricane, most people will evacuate immediately.</td>
<td>Victims show much reluctance to leave areas when warnings are issued. Fearing extensive and hysterical departures officials often delay issuing warning information. Media reports falsely convey images of whole communities fleeing in a wildly disorganized manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panic</td>
<td>The most common disaster response for most people is panic.</td>
<td>When people are warned of disaster, they are reluctant to believe the warning initially. If they are impacted without warning, their behavior continues to reflect self-control and is directed toward reduction of injury to self and those nearby. This matter is not black or white, however. Specific social conditions may produce panic behavior. These conditions are not commonly found in most disasters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looting</td>
<td>Prior to impact, and even more so afterwards, widespread looting occurs in disasters.</td>
<td>The public and many officials expect looting to occur. In a review of over 300 field studies, the Disaster Research Center found very few verified cases of looting — despite newspaper headlines that indicated extensive looting, and articles reporting money, watches, even gold teeth, being taken by looters. Researchers discovered these reports were fictitious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Social Behavior</td>
<td>During disaster, people become like wild animals and engage in various forms of antisocial behavior.</td>
<td>In sharp contrast to the myth, the prevailing behavior pattern is one of helping, providing assistance, and giving comfort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contagion</td>
<td>In disasters, fear and irrational behavior are contagious. As one person succumbs to acute fear and exhibits irrational behaviors like screaming or yelling, the entire group or crowd becomes hysterical.</td>
<td>When any member of a group becomes overly frightened and begins to act irrationally, other group members will try to comfort them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lethargy and Shock</td>
<td>Most disaster victims exhibit highly lethargic behavior which reflects disaster shock.</td>
<td>This image of disaster victims reflects a deeply ingrained myth that has been reinforced by some poorly done research studies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Dependency</td>
<td>Most disaster victims are so traumatized that they become psychologically dependent on relief agency personnel.</td>
<td>Hundreds of studies have documented the active responses by disaster victims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Abandonment</td>
<td>During disasters, large proportions of emergency workers will leave their work locations to be with their families.</td>
<td>Sociological research findings: Emergency workers will check on and make provisions for their families, but will not abandon their organizational duties.</td>
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anxiety that employees experience when encountering a disaster situation may require follow-up debriefing, so people can return to work and get back to normal routines. Designing an approach to training management in advance to deal with traumatized employees, recognize PTSD symptoms, conduct special performance interviews and provide outlets for counseling also will help with leading employees through recovery.

**SPECIAL NEEDS**
Finally, disaster planners must develop recovery plans that
cater to the special needs population within their workforce. Those with special needs in the workplace fare worse in disaster situations than their non-disabled counterparts. The National Organization on Disability (NOD) surveys in 2003 found that people with disabilities are much less prepared and far more anxious than non-disabled peers. Of the 54 million disabled people in the United States, 32 percent say plans have not been made to evacuate them from their workplace.

Accommodating special needs is therefore imperative to a disaster program’s success at the workplace. At minimum, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may impose heightened requirements on an organization before, during and after a disaster. Consult an attorney on this.

Including disabled employees in preparedness planning also can offer new perspectives to help ensure adequate preparations for everyone during a disaster. Help alleviate anxiety and expedite the overall recovery process by building a special needs registry to identify employees and describe special needs, purchasing specialized equipment for special needs employees and incorporating specialized training. Search for vendors with both continuity and ADA expertise.

Employees with special needs may require specific preparations, and recovery attention as well, because in addition to coping with any personal loss or injury that they may have suffered, people with disabilities who experience a disaster may be deprived of vital connections to guide animals, neighbors, even family members may no longer be able to follow their accustomed routines. Psychological results of experiencing a disaster also might force those with disabilities to confront their limitation or relive previous trauma. Pay extra attention.

Thorough preparation for crisis is proven to reduce employee tension and stress during an event, and to improve overall response and recovery times as well. As a person transforms from victim to survivor through the various phases of disaster, a new sense of pride and healthy admiration of strengths and potential can be realized. The onus is on disaster planners to ensure that people are prepared to respond in an efficient and effective manner so that recovery of the individual, family, community and economy can begin.

Kristen Deuel is the acting Business Continuity Manager for S1 Corporation in Norcross, Georgia as a CBCP and active volunteer of the Community Emergency Response Team. She is also a full-time graduate student attending the University Of Richmond, Virginia pursuing a Master of Science degree in Disaster Science.

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OSHA REQUESTS COMMENTS ON GUIDANCE ABOUT RESPIRATORS

The U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) invites comments from the public on the “Proposed Guidance on Workplace Stockpiling of Respirators and Facemasks for Pandemic Influenza” document. The Request for Comments was published in the 9 federal Register. OSHA is accepting comments until 8 July 2008.

“This proposed guidance supplements the existing document Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for an Influenza Pandemic released last year,” said Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Edwin Foulke Jr. “We want to assist employers in equipping their workplaces with protective devices so that their employees remain safe and healthy in the event of an influenza pandemic.”

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace for their employees. The Proposed Guidance offers private sector and government employers with recommendations and a method for calculating workplace stockpiling needs for respirators and facemasks. This allows employers to better protect their employees and reduce the impact of a pandemic. Submit comments electronically at www.regulations.gov, the federal e-rulemaking portal.

www.osha.gov

STATE OF FLORIDA STOCKS ANTIDOTE TO SMOKE-BORNE CYANIDE

Minute quantities of cyanide in smoke contribute to the death from smoke inhalation of 10,000 civilian and firefighter in the United States each year. The State of Florida emergency services authorities have decided that emergency units will now be equipped with cyanide antidote.

The Florida Department of Health, Office of Emergency Operations, will stock Cyanokit 5g (hydroxocobalamin for injection) antidote for cyanide poisoning in the state’s emergency medical service (EMS) and fire vehicles through a federal grant from DHS. Cyanokit is currently the only FDA-approved treatment that can be given to victims of suspected cyanide poisoning. It provides emergency first-responders with a critical care medication to treat patients immediately at the scene of a fire or other accident as well as in a hospital emergency room.

Studies have shown that cyanide, a common but often unrecognized toxic chemical found in fire smoke, may play a significant role in causing the deaths of smoke inhalation victims. In the United States, smoke inhalation is responsible for up to 10,000 civilian and firefighter deaths and more than 20,000 injuries annually.

“It is critical that we do whatever we can to enhance the safety of Florida’s first response personnel and the victims they care for in emergencies involving potential exposure to cyanide,” said Dr. Joe Nelson, state EMS medical director.

“Because cyanide poisoning acts very quickly, the immediate quick response capability that Cyanokit provides at the scene of an emergency will be critical in treating known or suspected victims of cyanide poisoning. Inclusion of Cyanokit in our EMS and fire vehicles will help protect both our emergency first responders and Florida’s citizens.”

Carolyn Myers, Ph.D., president of Dey, L.P., said that “Florida’s stocking of Cyanokit in its EMS and fire vehicles reflects a recognition by State officials that first responders need to be prepared to treat cyanide poisoning immediately in an emergency. The ability to treat suspected cases of cyanide poisoning at the scene of a fire or other accident gives potential victims a much-needed measure of safety when survival can be measured in minutes.”

www.hsdailywire.com; www.dey.com

OPTIMAL FREQUENCIES UNDERGROUND CAN IMPROVE CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

In a discovery that may lead to better communications in underground mines and subways, researchers at the National Institute of Standards and Technology have confirmed that underground tunnels can have a frequency “sweet spot” where signals may travel several times farther than at other frequencies. They used new data to confirm models developed in the 1970s.

The optimal frequency depends on the dimensions of the tunnel. For a typical subway-sized tunnel, the sweet spot is in the frequency range 400 MHz to 1 gigahertz (GHz). The research was supported in part by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security; it is published in a NIST series contributing to the first comprehensive public data collection on radio transmissions in large buildings and structures.

NIST said the data will support the development of open standards for the design of optimal systems, especially for emergency responders, adding that NIST researchers “were surprised by how much farther signals at the optimal frequency traveled in above-ground building corridors, as well as underground.”

Lead author Kate Remley said the results may help in designing wireless systems that improve control of search-and-rescue robots in subways. Some hand-held radios used by emergency responders for voice communications already operate within the optimal range for a typical subway, between around 400 MHz and 800 MHz. To provide the broadband data transfer capability desired for search and rescue with video (a bandwidth of at least 1 MHz), a regulatory change would be needed, Remley said.

The tunnel studies were performed in 2007 at Black Diamond Mines Regional Park near Antioch, Calif. NIST said tunnels can channel radio signals in the right frequency range because they act like giant waveguides – pipelike channels that confine and direct microwaves on integrated circuit wafers and in antenna feed systems and optical fibers. The channel shape reduces the losses caused when signals are absorbed or scattered by structural features.

www.boulder.nist.gov
OUTBOUND E-MAIL REMAINS A GREAT SOURCE OF SECURITY RISK

In its fifth annual study of outbound e-mail and content security issues, Proofpoint Inc. found that large enterprises continue to incur risk from — and take action against — information leaks over outbound e-mail, as well as newer communications media such as blogs, message boards, media sharing sites and mobile devices.

Outbound e-mail remains the greatest source of risk for U.S. enterprises with a record 44 percent of surveyed companies reporting that they investigated an e-mail leak of confidential information in the past 12 months. 41 percent of largest companies surveyed (with 20,000 or more employees) reported that they employ staff to read or otherwise analyze the contents of outbound e-mail. 22 percent of these companies said they employ staff primarily or exclusively for this purpose. Other key findings in the survey include:

- 40 percent of companies surveyed investigated an e-mail-based violation of privacy or data protection regulations in the past 12 months.
- 26 percent of companies surveyed terminated an employee for violating e-mail policies in the last 12 months.
- 23 percent of U.S. companies surveyed said their business was impacted by the exposure of sensitive or embarrassing information in the last 12 months.
- 34 percent of the largest companies (20,000 employees or more) reported that employee e-mail was subpoenaed in the last 12 months.

E-mail is not the only source of risk for information leakage, however. Respondents to the survey indicated significant risk resulting from employee use of blogs, message boards and media sharing sites (such as YouTube), as well as mobile devices. Some of the key findings include:

- 27 percent of companies surveyed had investigated the exposure of confidential, sensitive or private information from lost or stolen mobile devices in the past 12 months.
- 11 percent of surveyed companies disciplined employees for improper use of blogs/message boards in the past 12 months.
- 13 percent of surveyed companies disciplined employees for social network violations and 14 percent for improper use of media sharing sites in the past 12 months.
- 14 percent of publicly traded companies surveyed had investigated the exposure of material financial information (such as unannounced financial results) on blogs or message board postings in the last 12 months.

The complete report can be found at www.proofpoint.com/outbound/

MOST US FAMILIES LACK AN EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION PLAN

While 58 percent of mothers feel their families are prepared for a severe weather emergency, only 30 percent have created and discussed an emergency communications plan, according to a recent survey by the Home Safety Council.

That is a cause for concern given that many experts say a detailed communications plan plays one of the biggest roles in helping families stay connected to each other and emergency contacts during a natural disaster, such as hurricanes and floods.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is forecasting a 65 percent chance of an above average storm season this year, predicting there will be 12 to 16 named storms originating in the Atlantic Ocean, including up to five major hurricanes.

“When an emergency occurs, the first thing people often reach for is a phone to call their loved ones,” said Dan Alcazar, consumer marketing officer at EMBARQ. “As a communication company, we can help people prepare, especially when staying connected by phone may be an individual’s lifeline.”

“Creating an emergency communication plan is simple,” said Home Safety Council President Meri-K Appy. “First, families should discuss how they will communicate during an emergency and then record important plan information on their emergency communication cards. Making sure every family member has this information at his or her fingertips can be a lifesaver if you’re in different places when disaster strikes.”

Both Alcazar and Appy recommend having a corded landline phone in the home or workplace, which is a phone that has a handset connected to the base of the phone by a cord.

“Corded landline phones will continue to operate if the power goes out in your home,” Appy said. “It is often the most reliable source of communication in the case of an emergency.”

To help families stay connected during severe weather, EMBARQ and the Home Safety Council created wallet-sized emergency communication cards that include space to list important phone numbers and medical information.

www.embarq.com/severeweather

THREE STEPS STRENGTHEN INDIVIDUAL EMERGENCY PREPARATION

The American Red Cross urges everyone to dust off their disaster supplies kit and get better prepared now for a variety of disasters such as hurricanes and the high winds, flooding and tornadoes that may accompany them.

“By taking three basic preparedness actions you can get ‘Red Cross Ready’ for disasters and other emergencies 1) Get a kit, 2) Make a plan and 3) Be informed,” said Mary S. Elcano, acting president and CEO of the American Red Cross. The Red Cross recommends the following preparedness actions:

Get or assemble a disaster supplies kit:

- Gather enough emergency supplies to meet your needs. A portable kit, stored in a sturdy, easy to carry, water resistant container should have enough supplies for three days. The Red Cross also recommends having at least two weeks worth of supplies at home and to keep a smaller kit in the trunk of your car. Check your kit and replace the stock every six months. Whether you purchase a kit or choose to build your own, your kit should include:
  - A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person, per day) and ready-to-eat non-perishable foods, such as tuna fish, peanut butter, crackers, canned fruit, juice boxes etc.
  - A manual can opener.
  - A battery-powered or hand-crank radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries.
  - A first aid kit and reference guide.
  - Prescription and non-prescription medication items.
  - Copies of important documents, including

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birth certificates, insurance policies and social security cards.

• Cash. ATMs and credit cards won’t work if the power is out.
• Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.
• A change of clothes for everyone, including long-sleeved shirts, long pants and sturdy footwear.
• One blanket or sleeping bag per person.
• Emergency tools, including tools to turn off utilities.
• An extra set of home and car keys.
• An extra pair of glasses or contact lenses, extra batteries for hearing aids.
• Pet supplies.

Prepare a personal disaster and evacuation plan:
• The American Red Cross urges each and every household to develop a household disaster plan.
• Meet with your family to create a plan. Discuss the information you have gathered and why it is important to prepare for a disaster.
• Identify two meeting places: One right outside your home in case of a sudden emergency, like a fire, and one outside your neighborhood in case you can’t return home.
• Be sure to make advanced preparations for your pets. Be aware that pets may not be allowed in shelters. Contact hotels, motels, family members and animal shelters to see if they would allow pets in a disaster situation. Keep a contact list of “pet friendly” locations. If you are asked to evacuate, take your pets with you.
• Choose an out-of-area emergency contact person. During or after a disaster, it’s often easier to call long distance, especially if local phone lines are overloaded or out of service. Family members should call this person and tell them where they are. Everyone must know your emergency contact person’s phone number and email address.
• Tell your family about the Safe and Well web site accessible at all times via www.redcross.org. The Safe and Well Web site is an Internet-based tool that allows those directly affected by a disaster to let their loved ones know of their well-being. People within a disaster affected area are able to select and post standard “safe and well” messages. Concerned family members who know the person’s phone number (home, cell or work) or a complete home address can search for the messages posted by those who self-register.
• Show and explain to each family member how and when to turn off the water and electricity at the main switches. Turn gas off only if instructed by local authorities. Remember, if the gas is shut-off, only a professional can turn it back on.
• Plan your evacuation route. Use local maps and identify alternate evacuation routes from home, work and/or school. Know where you are going and how you plan to get there before you leave home.

Get informed:
• Find out what types of disasters are likely to occur in your area and how to prepare for each.
• Find out how local authorities will contact you during a disaster. Listen to local media broadcasts or NOAA Weather Radio for the latest storm conditions and follow the advice of local authorities.
• Contact your local American Red Cross chapter for details about community disaster education presentations that may be arranged or are available in your workplace, school or community organization.
• Get trained in CPR and first aid so you will know how to respond to emergencies in the event that help is delayed.
• If you are told to evacuate, do so immediately. You may choose to evacuate sooner than alerted if you think you may need additional time.

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Why Should the Boss Listen to You?

Secrets of gaining management’s trust

By James E. Lukaszewski, ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA, CCEP

Question: I accepted my current position at the beginning of this year. With two dozen years in management (law enforcement/security), I have never seen a company with a greater need for security. The company has been without a security leader for more than two years. To be very blunt, they do not trust security professionals. Where do I start?

Answer: Your perception is likely right on target. Trust matters. The most crucial ingredient for building or rebuilding trust is learning to view the world more from management’s perspective than from that of the staff function you represent. In fact, this ability of empathy is a prerequisite for establishing a sound relationship.

At the back of the boss’ mind are wonderings about consultants, counselors and staff. Does this person really know what I do here every day, as they offer advice and counsel? Do they even care about what I want to accomplish?

Being listened to and having impact require that you gain the confidence of top leadership, understand and speak their lan-
guage, avoid the typical staff shortcomings that annoy bosses, respect the boss’ time, develop the discipline to present your ideas with brief powerful presentations, give useful feedback and reduce the number of management surprises.

During my discussions with chief executives and leaders, specifically about advice they get both internally and externally, a pattern of frustration-inducing behaviors emerges relatively quickly. Avoid these behaviors:

• Suggesting more ideas and concepts than can possibly be achieved or even considered. Has the boss finished last week’s priorities yet?
• Engaging in time-wasting and nonspecific (purposeless) conversations. Talk about what matters from their perspective.
• Offering information that is late or incomplete, with some key facts and data or interpretations apparently being purposely withheld.
• Reinforcing information that is already known or could be gathered independently. State the obvious if others are ignoring it.
• Giving only partial input, apparently on the assumption that the boss knows more, or should know more than he or she does.
• Being less than candid.
• Failing to end meetings on time. It is better to have several smaller meetings that all end on time, regardless of when they began, rather than one or two large meetings that put everyone, including operations people, behind schedule and that accomplish less or nothing.

The problem with all these behaviors is that they distract and irritate top executives and erect barriers to their taking your advice or taking you seriously.

Establishing relationships with management is doubly hard when a vacuum in staff leadership has existed for some time. When beginning a new senior staff position, initial discussions and orientations—especially from the existing staff perspective—quickly shift from security problems and other crucial issues to criticism of leaders. Staffers begin assigning blame for the current situation, speculating about the sources and causes of the existing challenges, offering miscellaneous indictments of style, complaining of failure to adapt or adopt preventive or preemptive measures and generally negatively assessing leadership from the staff perspective.

Whenever I hear these complaints, my thoughts are, “If I were your boss hearing this discussion, I would fire you on the spot.” Why? This kind of thinking is fundamentally at odds with how the CEO thinks and what he or she expects. Rather than cataloging the leader’s faults, deficiencies and other problematic characteristics, try to develop methods, techniques and processes that constructively and promptly address weaknesses, shortcomings or blind spots.

Criticisms too often sound as though things would be a lot better, fairly quickly, were the boss to leave for a day or two, and the staff allowed to drive the bus. This is a dangerous train of thought because few staff members have the management skills or ambition necessary to drive anything in operations. Operations people have a different kind and scope of training and preparation.

Second, the bus clearly belongs to management, which must drive wherever they want to go. We are on the bus as staff people, to help those who are driving do a better job.

If you want to be listened to and have an impact, start where the boss believes he or she is. Focus on establishing a relationship of trust and common direction with the boss. These are the relationship elements that matter.

Mutual recognition of a common direction provides the platform for fixing various other shortcomings that may indeed be present. Truly understanding the boss’ perspective also may illustrate the relevance or irrelevance of staff concerns to achieving the boss’ goals.

Speaking management’s language means to avoid teaching the boss security, business continuity and recovery nomenclature, language and concepts. Rather, find ways to translate the functions you perform or want to accomplish into management’s language.

Here are some examples of sources of terminology that can coexist easily in both worlds (security and management):

- Executive and management development
- Exposure management and issue surveillance
- Organizational and operational review and analysis
- Readiness
- Staff development
- Strategic planning

A great barrier to more effective staff use and input is reluctance to describe staff functions in management terms. A reason for this reluctance is that successfully describing these staff functions in management terms may lead to close questioning about why a function or activity exists at all.

Take the time to look at the services you offer, and recast them effectively in recognizable management language. If you find them difficult to translate, what you are developing may be too staff oriented. Let it go or fix it.

James E. Lukaszewski ABC, APR, Fellow PRSA, CCEP, author of Why Should the Boss Listen to You (Jossey-Bass: 2008), is a frequent columnist for Global Assurance. He can be reached at crisisguru@e911.com.
PREDICTING GLOBAL PANDEMICS MAY BECOME MORE ACCURATE
Two Los Alamos National Laboratory theorists have developed a mathematical tool which could help health experts and crisis managers determine in real time whether an emerging infectious disease such as avian influenza H5N1 is poised to spread globally.

In a paper published recently in the Public Library of Science (PLoS), researchers Luís Bettencourt and Ruy Ribeiro of Los Alamos Theoretical Division describe a novel approach to reading subtle changes in epidemiological data to gain insight into whether something like the H5N1 strain of avian influenza, commonly known as the bird flu, has gained the ability to touch off a deadly global pandemic.

“What we wanted to create was a mathematically rigorous way to account for changes in transmissibility,” said Bettencourt. “We now have a tool that will tell us in the very short term what is happening based on anomaly detection. What this method won’t tell you is what’s going to happen five years from now.”

Bettencourt and Ribeiro began their work nearly three years ago, at a time when the world was wondering whether avian influenza H5N1, with its relatively high human mortality rate, could become a frightening new pandemic. Health experts believe that right now the virus primarily infects humans who come in contact with infected poultry. Some health experts, however, fear the virus could evolve to a form that would become transmissible from human to human, the basis of a pandemic like the 1918 Spanish Flu that killed an estimated 50 million people.

The Los Alamos researchers set out to create a “smart methodology” to look at changes in disease transmissibility that did not require mounds of epidemiological surveillance data for accuracy. The ability to look at small disease populations in real time could allow responders and health experts to implement quarantine policies and provide medical resources to key areas early on in an emerging pandemic and possibly stem the spread.

Bettencourt and Ribeiro developed an extension of standard epidemiological models that describes the probability of disease spread among a given population. The model then takes into account actual disease surveillance data gathered by health experts like the World Health Organization (WHO) and looks for anomalies in the expected transmission rate versus the actual one.

Based on these data, the model provides health experts actual transmission probabilities for the disease. Unlike other statistical models that require huge amounts of data for accuracy, the Los Alamos tool works on very small populations such as a handful of infected people in a remote village. After developing their Bayesian estimation of epidemic potential, Bettencourt went back and looked at actual epidemiological surveillance data collected during Bird Flu outbreaks in certain parts of the world. Their model accurately portrayed actual transmission scenarios, lending confidence to its methodology.

In addition to its utility in understanding the transmissibility of emerging diseases, the new method is also advantageous because it allows public health experts to study outbreaks of more common ailments such as seasonal influenza early on. This new method can assist medical professionals in making better estimates of potential morbidity and mortality, along with assessments of intervention strategies and resource allocations that can help a population better cope with a developing seasonal outbreak.

“We are closing the loop on science-based prediction of transmission consequences in real time,” said Ribeiro. “A program of this type is something that needs to be implemented at a worldwide level to provide an integrated way to respond a priori to an emerging disease threat.”

CHINA EVACUATES 200,000
Chinese authorities had evacuated nearly 200,000 people by May 31, and warned more than 1 million others to be ready to leave quickly, as a lake formed by a devastating earthquake threatened to breach its dam.

The confirmed death toll from China’s worst quake in three decades was raised on May 31 to 68,977, an increase of about 120 people from a day earlier. Another 17,974 people were still missing, the State Council said. The increase was the smallest since the government started issuing a daily death toll shortly after the quake hit.

Hundreds of Chinese troops have been working around the clock to drain Tangjia Shan lake in Sichuan province. The lake formed above Beichuan town in the Mianyang region when a hillside plunged into a river valley during the May 12 quake that killed more than 68,000 people.

The official Xinhua News Agency said work on a runoff channel had been completed. It quoted Yue Xi, deputy chief of the water and electricity section of the People’s Armed Police, as saying water was expected to be discharged soon.

Xinhua said 197,477 people were evacuated to safe ground by May 31. It did not say how the exact number was arrived at, and many of the people may have moved just short distances to higher areas.

The news agency said Tan Li, the Communist Party chief of Mianyang, had issued another order that calling for all 1.3 million people in the area to be evacuated if “the barrier of the quake lake
fully opens” and floods the area.

An official with the press office of Mianyang City Quake Control and Relief Headquarters, who would give only her surname of Chen, said the May 31 drill would involve testing the command system of various levels of government officials to ensure that any order to evacuate— if it comes— would be passed on quickly to everyone in the valley. There was no sign that the dam was about to burst. Troops have sealed off Beichuan to the public.

Tangjiashan is the largest of more than 30 lakes that have formed behind landslides caused by the quake, which also weakened man-made dams in the mountainous parts of the disaster zone. Millions of people in Sichuan are already living in tent camps and prefabricated housing, which have taken on the tone of new villages.

Xinhua also reported that President Hu Jintao arrived on May 31 to check on relief efforts in Shaanxi province. Just to the north of Sichuan, Shaanxi also suffered damage in the May 12 earthquake.

www.time.com

SOCIAL NETWORKING TECHNOLOGIES POSE MAJOR NEW CHALLENGE

Social networking technologies, web mashups, multicore and hybrid processors and cloud computing are amongst the ten most disruptive technologies that will shape the information technology (IT) landscape over the next five years, according to research and advisory firm Gartner.

Speaking at the Gartner Emerging Trends and Technologies Roadshow in Melbourne, Gartner Fellow David Cearley said that business IT applications will start to mirror the features found in popular consumer social software, such as Facebook and MySpace, as organizations look to improve employee collaboration and harness the community feedback of customers.

“Social software provides a platform that encourages participation and feed-back from employees and customers alike,” he said. “The added value for businesses is being able to collect this feedback into a single point that reflects collective attitudes, which can help shape a business strategy.

“Multicore processors are expanding the horizons of what’s possible with software, but single-threaded applications won’t be able to take advantage of their power,” Cearley said. Enterprises should therefore “perform an audit to identify applications that will need remediation to continue to meet service-level requirements in the multicore era.”

By 2010, Gartner predicts that web mashups, which mix content from publicly available sources, will be the dominant model (80 percent) for the creation of new enterprise applications.

“Because mashups can be created quickly and easily, they create possibilities for a new class of short-term or disposable applications that would not normally attract development dollars,” said Cearley. “The ability to combine information into a common dashboard or visualise it using geo-location or mapping software is extremely powerful.”

Within the next five years, information will be presented via new user interfaces such as organic light-emitting displays, digital paper and billboards, holographic and 3D imaging and smart fabric.

By 2010, it will cost less than US$1 to add a three-axis accelerometer — which allows a device, such as Nintendo’s Wii controller, to sense when and how it is being moved — to a piece of electronic equipment. “Acceleration and attitude (tilt) can be combined with technologies such as wireless to perform functions such as ‘touch to exchange business cards,’” said Cearley.

Chief Information Officers (CIOs) who see their jobs as keeping the data center running, business continuity planning and finding new technology toys to show to people will not survive. Instead, they will have to think beyond the constraints of conventional, in order to identify the technologies that might be in widespread use a few years from now.

Gartner recommends that CIOs establish a formal mechanism for evaluating emerging trends and technologies, set up virtual teams of their best staff, and give them time to spend researching new ideas and innovations, especially those that are being driven by consumer and Web 2.0 technologies.

“The CIO then needs to act as a conduit from the business to the technology. He or she needs to see how it might be possible to use these technologies to solve a problem the business has identified,” Cearley said.

www.contingencynews.com

AN EARTHQUAKE COMES TO A SMALL TOWN

The casualties of the earthquake lie face-down on the wet pavement outside Brynjolfur Gesson’s garage, their red hats and white beards a mess of ceramic shards.

Unlike his garden gnomes, Gesson wasn’t home when the earthquake struck his home earlier in the afternoon, sending a wide crack up the wall of his kitchen, where broken plates, beer cans, and paper lie in a chaotic heap on the floor. As his neighbors cram mattresses and suitcases into cars as they head for the homes of relatives in nearby Reykjavik, Gesson can’t say where he plans to go. “I don’t know,” he says, frustrated, and retreats back inside to survey the damage.

Although this quake near the small town of Selfloss registered 6.1 on the Richter scale, and was followed by over 100 small aftershocks that rattled windows and nerves late into the night and the following day, there were no serious injuries or major structural damages. Still, “Everybody was visibly shaken,” says the town’s police chief, Olafur Helgi Kjartansson. “We didn’t have any clue that it was coming.”

Iceland carefully monitors its seismic activity, as well it ought to, for this isolated nation of just over 300,000 makes its
home on a piece of volcanic rock that is among the most unpredictable pieces of land on the planet. Above the Earth’s crust, its cosmopolitan and wealthy population shops for Land Rovers and new condos, while beneath the ground, magma chambers churn, occasionally rising to the surface with varying degrees of destruction.

Iceland straddles the mid-Atlantic ridge, where the Eurasian and North American plates are slowly drifting apart. Unlike locations where parts of the earth grind up against one another, the drifting apart of the plates means a lot of small quakes — but not usually the kind that dislodges wall radiators or send Scandinavian-modern shelf units flying across the room.

As shocked as they may have been by this quake, they were not unprepared. Minutes after the quake, police were on the streets ordering people to evacuate their homes in anticipation of an aftershock. They were quickly joined by hundreds of search-and-rescue volunteers, regularly called on for such varied emergency tasks as fetching tourists trapped in bad weather to pulling vehicles out of glacial crevasses.

A little over three hours after the quake, dozens of SAR volunteers in red fleeces, all-weather pants and hiking boots are gathered in a parking lot in Hveragerdi, waiting for orders from their command center. Emil Jonsson, an electrician by trade from a suburb of Reykjavik, got a call from his unit within 15 minutes of the tremor. He has already finished going through houses in the area to assess any damage.

“The houses were okay, but everything inside had fallen,” says Jonsson. “Now I’m waiting for another job.”

Ten minutes along the road past the wide green fields of sheep farms, an orange tent stands alongside a mobile command center outside Selfloss’ police headquarters. The street is lined with white SUVs rigged with thick antennae and monster tires, while dozens of uniformed police officers mill about drinking coffee and smoking.

Police Chief Kjartansson surveys the disarray in his headquarters, littered with scattered papers and filing cabinets. “If somebody had been taking their passport picture an hour earlier, you can see what would have happened,” he notes, pointing to the tall metal column that has fallen on the precise spot where people sit to be photographed. At the door of another office, a bookshelf has collapsed onto a chair. “If somebody had been sitting at that desk,” he says, not finishing his sentence.

Modern Iceland has been remarkably lucky in the face of its unpredictable geography. Past centuries may have seen catastrophic natural disasters, but the worst in the nation’s recent history was a series of avalanches in the 1990s that killed over 30 people.

But if the hundreds of volunteers, the dozens of converted emergency 4x4s, the strategic maps and the shelter tents seem like overkill in response to the day’s minor toll, they also reflect the fragility and communal sense of responsibility fostered by Iceland’s isolation. Since the U.S. military pulled out in 2006, Icelanders take the manifestations of their isolation — whether it’s a lack of fresh produce or facing the forces of nature without any immediate help — with a Nordic stiff upper lip.

As evening approaches in Hveragerdi, a small town built on a geothermal field so active that geysers have been known to spontaneously sprout in people’s backyards, two boys bounce a pair of basketballs past the squadron of SAR volunteers. Did they feel the quake? “Yeah!” says Thorarinn Fridricksson, dribbling his ball. “We ran outside. I was laughing.”

www.time.com
After years of education and budget planning, your organization finally realized that instituting a business continuity plan, ensuring data redundancy and even having an alternate operations site are all prudent investments for the future.

Through several evolutions of the continuity of operations plan, true one-button business continuity is finally achieved. Anticipating employee needs, the company arranged for fuel, food and water at the alternate operations site.

And you achieved more, despite the costs. Leadership heeds your counsel and performs semi-annual, full-scale disaster drills, testing every aspect of the plan and practicing to the point of mastery. As predicted, the process enhancements inherent in business continuity planning manifest in greater customer satisfaction, improved employee morale and bottom-line profit.

No sooner does the organization announce full disaster readiness than a natural disaster strikes. Hours later, the community suffers devastating losses. Homes are destroyed, power and water services are cut off, and commercial buildings are rendered uninhabitable.

But the organization is prepared. The next morning, the readiness button is pushed, no data is lost, and the alternate operations site roars to life.

EVERYTHING IS FINE. RIGHT?
Wrong. Only two of three employees come to work. You assumed that nearly all of them would come. Now your one-button plan does not work.

You had planned on playing ball in the Field of Dreams only to discover the staff is playing Survivor. You are in big trouble. Why did they vote you—or rather the organization, whose continuity planning functions you represent—off the island?

Why did responsible and loyal employees deviate from their expected behavior?

The question is not one of responsibility, but one of human behavior.

THE ROOF THAT BECAME A FOUNDATION
Following Hurricane Charlie, a major Florida coastal hospital suffered roof damage. Other than a few wet walls and a leak in the stairwell, the hospital was dry and secure. Despite this and a contractual requirement to report to work, a dis-
turing percentage of employees did not come to work for several days.

The employees were busy safeguarding themselves and their families. The lack of physical security intensified the need to stay connected. Families stayed together repairing homes, buying generators, even buying food as a group.

Investigating the causes for the high absenteeism rather than just firing critical people summarily, the hospital learned that 94 percent of their employees lived within one mile of the coast and 99 percent of all employees had roof damage. In response, the hospital convinced its roofing contractor to give first priority—after the hospital—to hospital employees, beginning with those who work during the disaster or the disaster response. This cost the hospital nothing, and guaranteed to the roofing contractor paying business, and ensured employees would have home repairs completed quickly.

The next hurricane (Francis) caused more roof damage than Charlie, but there was virtually no absenteeism following the storm. By providing for the employees’ safety and the safety of the employees’ families, the hospital’s needs became strongly connected to meeting the employees’ needs.

WHERE IS CONTINGENCY PLANNING ON YOUR EMPLOYEES’ PYRAMID OF NEEDS?

In the 1950s, Abraham Maslow described a hierarchy of needs based on the physiological and psychological progression of development in the human. Maslow’s principles state that people must satisfy basic foundational needs before they can act to satisfy higher order needs.

Maslow’s hierarchy says one must first secure the immediate environment before one can eat or sleep. The first step is physiological need fulfillment. One must obtain shelter and safety items, such as fire light, heat and cooking, before one can look after the same needs for family.

Maslow defined physiological and safety needs as foundational needs of his hierarchical pyramid of needs. Maslow then described and distinguished “higher order needs,” including external validation and reward, external self-esteem needs, internal validation and self actuation internal self-esteem needs, and the exploration, discovery and creativity or philosophical needs.

As with the foundational needs, fulfillment at each level of higher order needs is required before one can act well, based on a need at the next level.

Maslow’s hierarchy explains why responsible and loyal employees do not come to work after a disaster. They are driven to fulfill more basic needs first.

The priority of these most basic needs explains the absenteeism often associated with the post-disaster period. Simply put, they are incapable of leaving themselves and their family at risk in order to go to work.

How can an employer become a higher priority for the employee in the post disaster period? They can create direct connections between the employees’ most basic needs and the organization’s need for them to come to work.

VOTED OFF THE ISLAND

In 2003, Shultz related Maslow’s hierarchy to the psychological needs of disaster survivors. Shultz found that physical safety and security—shelter and clothing—are the most essential of these foundational needs, followed by sustenance—food, water and medications.

Shultz said that these psychological needs are actions rather than objects as described by Maslow. Shultz emphasizes the need to obtain physical safety and security, which Shultz called the need for safeguard, and the need to obtain sustenance, the need to sustain. Shultz’s groups safeguard and sustain together in the safety level of his hierarchy.

Shultz next described the need to comfort and connect with family, close friends or others significant in one’s life.

Safeguard and sustain needs are physical activities that lend an overall sense of psychological well being. By contrast, comfort is a combination of physical needs—climate controlled environment, a place to sleep or a blanket—as well as psychological needs, such as empathy, understanding and camaraderie.

This combination of the physical and the psychological represents a transition in the type of needs that the disaster survivor seeks. Connect is even less a physical need—telephone, e-mail, letters, radio, television—as opposed to a psychological need or a sense of closeness.

The combination of comfort and connect spurs disaster survivors to remain close to their family. If not met, these combined needs can cause families to remain together, as an imperative, even to the point of refusing evacuation if the family cannot stay together or travel as a unit.

Shultz calls this set of combined needs the function level in his hierarchy. He says that without the prior satisfaction of both comfort and connect needs, most disaster survivors will be incapable of normal function.

Shultz concluded that with the first four actions completed, one was ready to advise—gather information and make decisions on how to obtain higher order needs—and activate or act on those decisions. Shultz states that advise and activate needs must be satisfied for a disaster survivor to resume taking independent, autonomous action. Survivors can then, at this point, assume their work roles. Shultz calls this highest level of his hierarchy: action.

Shultz found that performing work tasks after a disaster is in the highest strata—activate—of performance. Maslow similarly assigns work to the category of external and internal self esteem needs. Thus, for employees to report to work after a disaster, they must ascend to the highest levels of both Shultz and Maslow’s hierarchies.

Recent disaster response and recovery experience in the field of disaster behavioral health has confirmed a well-functioning disaster sur-
FIGURE 2

Safeguard

Shultz Hierarchy

vivor must perform Shultz’s six actions within each of Maslow’s seven orders of needs.

Field observations show that disaster survivors must safeguard, sustain, comfort, connect, advise and activate at Maslow’s physiological level before they can begin taking the same actions at Maslow’s Safety level. Similarly, the disaster survivor must safeguard, sustain, comfort, connect, advise and activate at Maslow’s love and belonging level before they can begin to act at Maslow’s external self-esteem level. Ultimately, as both Maslow and Shultz predicted, the disaster survivor must safeguard, sustain, comfort, connect, advise and activate at Maslow’s external self-esteem level before they will report to work.

SERVING THE NEEDS

Most employers depend on four factors to ensure employees reporting to work, to include pay, appreciation, loyalty and fear.

History has shown that even in light of above-industry standard pay, employees—often even management—will secure the home and family before reporting to work. When asked, these people cite personal values and family priorities as the reasons for their potentially risky change in behavior. Once the disaster is past, most of these people return to pre-disaster work ethics and schedules.

Although employer appreciation of employees is often a greater motivator than pay, the employer is on a different priority level than the family, during a disaster. Thus, when the family is threatened, the employer is again off the island, until the disaster is past and the threat is removed.

Like appreciation, employee loyalty is a superb motivator pre-disaster, but often fails to change behavior significantly during a disaster, or during the immediate disaster response phase. Intuitively, one would expect that employees with a high sense of employer loyalty would be apt to return to work sooner. Maslow and Shultz have shown, however, that basic needs must be met before even these employees are effective, even if they do show up.

Fear of job loss is seldom an effective tool to induce employees to return to work after a disaster. Quite the opposite, the data suggest that employers who resort to threats as the means of ensuring workplace attendance are the ones most likely to have high disaster related absenteeism. Without a positive employer-employee relationship, the employer is simply voted off the employee’s psychological island.

Many corporations are looking at employee needs and other barriers to attendance in an attempt to decrease employee absenteeism in event of disaster and to boost the employer-employee relationship. Those business continuity and disaster recovery plans that include employee needs provide a means to return to work. The problem is that all of these are higher levels on Maslow’s hierarchy. In short—beforepay, appreciation, loyalty—gasoline and even food become inducements to report to work, the employee must obtain physiological and safety needs for themselves and their family.

The key, therefore, is to provide for employees’ foundational needs at the most basic levels of safeguard and sustain before a disaster occurs. It is not enough to ensure continuity, employers must ensure personnel continuity and resilience.

PREPARE CONCRETELY

The employer who meets these more basic needs is the employer who, like the Florida hospital, will enjoy high employee attendance. How does an employer meet these more basic needs? Ask employees what they need in order to take care of themselves and their family. Once it is known what employees will need in their time of adversity, help them prepare in the same way you prepared your company.

Safeguard. Hold a family preparedness fair at work where all employees and families learn to create a family disaster plan, preparing themselves and their homes for disaster. Instead of the usual holiday gift, give each employee a 96-hour Go-Pak and keep giving one each year until every member of each employee’s family has a Go-Pak. Give each new hire a Go-Pak as a welcome gift.

Sustain. Rather than stockpiling food and water at the workplace, have each employee stockpile their share at home. During a disaster, the Go-Pak can be replenished each evening after work from that stockpile. If the family is in need, the stockpile can be shared without risk of repercussions.

Comfort. Encourage employees to have personal photos and mementoes in the workplace, so that they feel a personal emotional connection to the workplace as a home away from home, and their colleagues as their family away from home. Make arrangements for rest areas and cots for employees who may have to stay onsite after a disaster. Consider installing a generator and other affordable means of maintaining a comfortable work environment.

Connect. Ensure that your continuity of communications plan includes keeping employees in touch with family during business continuity operations. A family phone is a great morale booster, even if unused, because it says to everyone, “you are important and so is your family.”

Advise. Educate the staff on their role in the continuity of operations plan and how they can participate if family demands prevent onsite attendance. Giving options enables employees to make informed decisions that often will favor the employer in the short and long term.

Activate. Empower employees to help themselves by helping you. Make participation in the continuity of operations plan easy, rather than mandatory. Make reporting to work on disaster day an achievement, and provide praise for the effort.

By safeguarding, sustaining, comforting, connecting, advising and activating your employees and their family, you become an essential part of the family’s survival. You stay on the island.

Dr. Maurice A. Ramirez is the President of High Alert, LLC and Founding Chairperson of the American Board of Disaster Medicine - www.HighAlert.com
FAST SHELTER FOR CRISSES

Instant protection from the weather

Fast Shelter, a division of Sky Signs Balloons, Ltd, has added two models — the 950, and the 950XT — to its inflatable structures line. The model 950 is 25 feet long by 16 feet wide by 8.5 feet tall. When not in use it packs into a canvas duffle bag 30 inches in diameter. From duffle bag to fully inflated takes less than 2 minute. Fast Shelters are designed to be used for easy portability. Many applications include mobile body repair, window tinting and glass replacement, interior restoration and auto detailing. Additionally, the shelters have been used in industrial applications such as new construction and plant maintenance. Recently six of the largest shelters — the model 4000 (40 feet long) — were shipped to Kuwait for use by the Kuwait Oil Company. Fast Shelter has been manufacturing shelters since 1998 and has produced over 500 shelters. Sky Signs Balloons, Ltd has been manufacturing advertising inflatables since 1978.

www.fastshelter.com

STORAGE VOLUME MANAGER

Control all video and sensor data

The Storage Volume Manager (SVM) is the control center in charge of any and all video and sensor data the SKM is capturing, distributing, and archiving. A typical enterprise surveillance system comprises hundreds, if not thousands of cameras. The data creation is enormous. The SVM is designed to handle this massive influx of data and direct it to any number of commercially available manufacturers’ storage device (SAN, NAS, DAS).

The second major role of the SVM is to enable total policy-based archival rules. This provides for infinite configuration scenarios dictating individual camera storage duration, frame rate over time, event migration, and back up schedules. The SVM also generates graphical reports showing disk utilization per storage volume, and even on a camera specific basis. This functionality lets video and sensor data be allocated across multiple disk volumes in the most efficient manner possible. System administrators are able to fine tune the storage system to deliver maximum efficiency; translating into huge storage infrastructure savings.

www.videonext.com

BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN TEMPLATE

Create a professional disaster recovery and business continuity plan in one day

Is your business one of the many that knows it needs a business continuity plan, but have never had the resources or expertise to create one? Do you already have a plan? Perhaps it’s out of date and you’re not sure it contains the right information. This template may be your answer. Step by careful step, word by word, paragraph by paragraph, and page by page, our template empowers you to plan for any crisis that your business suffers. This template is designed in a logical and flowing manner, with the plan containing six parts that provide easy navigation, making it simple to update and maintain as your business changes over time.

This template comes in an easy to use Microsoft Word® template, is easy to understand, and includes free 12-month support from expert consultants. It meets compliance requirements (SOX, ITIL, BS25999, ISO 17799/27001, HB 221), and is fully customizable.

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THE DISASTER GAME

Better tabletop exercises

The Disaster Game is a thinking tool used to create unique and highly detailed disaster event scenarios that engage and challenge exercise partici-
pants. The “in-a-box” version of The Disaster Game features; 52 event-card (red) deck, and the 52 variable-card (blue) deck, allowing over 900 unique event scenarios to be randomly generated. A dice-roll based day of week, time of day, and environment generation makes over 25,000 possible conditions available. The Disaster Game is perfect for small groups, and allows hands-on interaction with the game components. Instructors can build exercises manually, selecting favorite events and variables, for pre-planned scenarios. Hyper-linked PDF copies of both card decks — and additional supporting materials, for presentations and use in larger group settings — are now available.

EXIT SIGN
Energy star-rated
The Tuff-Act exit sign from Chloride is wet/damp location listed and sturdy enough for extreme environments. Energy Star-rated, illumination is achieved with the use of long-lasting, high-brightness LEDs. This sign uses die-cast aluminum housing with premium, impact-resistant, injection-molded polycarbonate covers. Its diagnostics continuously monitor all critical functions of the sign, and self-testing satisfies the monthly periodic testing requirements in NFPA 101 and the IBC. This sign is available in AC only and self-powered models and comes standard with Intelli-Charge self-testing diagnostics electronics.

www.chloridesys.com

IMPROVED FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS
Reduce the costs of nuisance alarms
Silent Knight’s core offerings of addressable fire alarm control panels (FACPs), including its Farenhyt IFP Series and IntelliKnight products, provide a variety of installation advantages over conventional fire systems, affording users a number of detailed information capabilities and a wide range of wire-routing strategies. In addition to features specially designed to harbor system data and alleviate maintenance time and costs, several enhancements are available on Silent Knight’s complete line of FACPs to mitigate false alarms. These enhancements include drift compensation, which acts as the smoke detector’s chambers begin to accumulate dirt and dust particles that result from day-to-day activity. Silent Knight addressable control panels detect this gradual accumulation of dirt and raise the smoke detector’s alarm threshold accordingly. This single action helps eliminate the natural tendency of a detector to get more sensitive over time as contaminants build up in the sensor, and proves extremely effective in reducing false alarms. Silent Knight addressable control panels also “flag” dirty smoke detectors that are nearing the limits of drift compensation with a maintenance alert condition. This feature gives a two-level warning of detectors that need to be serviced; the first level is made available to the installers during routine testing or maintenance, the second level causes a local “trouble” signal (not an alarm) that can also be reported to a central station. Detectors in maintenance alert condition can be viewed locally on the system or uploaded and viewed remotely using the Silent Knight Software Suite (SKSS) up-download software. Silent Knight uses an improved communication method to communicate with the sensors. A digital protocol provides information that is not prone to false alarms from electrical interference. An interruption in communication spurs a trouble alert, rather than a false or nuisance alarm.


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