Business Impact Analysis
Best Practice to prioritize Services and Activities

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Agenda

Products and Services Prioritization

Process Prioritization

Activity Prioritization

Product and Services Prioritization Introduction (overview)

- As the first step in the BIA process, the organization's top management should agree on the priority of products and services following a disruptive incident which may threaten the achievement of their objectives.

It is top management's responsibility to make these decisions because:

- They set the objectives of the organization

- They have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the continuity of the organization and the fulfilment of its objectives

- They have the widest view of the entire organization from which to assess priorities

- They can choose to override contractual and other obligations in setting priorities in exceptional circumstances

- They are aware of planned future changes and other factors which may affect the business continuity requirements

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- For each group of products and services the organization should document:

- The time after which continued failure to deliver them becomes unacceptable to the organization because the impacts noted above threaten its survival or make its objectives no longer achievable (maximum tolerable periods of disruption or maximum acceptable outage)

- The reason(s) why this time period has been identified with reference to the growing impacts over time

- The requirements for delivery (to be confirmed later in the BIA process)

- Impacts almost always increase over time. Whilst costs may increase at a rate proportional to the disruption time, some impacts may not increase linearly – financial impacts can suddenly increase as contract penalties are incurred or customers lost and reputational damage can occur suddenly at a point during the disruption.

Inputs

Top management may consider the following information in setting product and service priorities:

- Current organizational mission, objectives, and strategic direction

- Current BCM programme scope

- Assessment of product and service priorities from a previous top management review

- List of legal and regulatory requirements to which the organization or specific products and services are subject (as well as an assessment of the consequences of breaching each requirement)

- Contractual requirements, including penalties for failure to deliver

- Assessment of reputational, financial, or other impacts for failure to deliver

- Recent serious post-incident reports and their impact, if relevant

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Outcomes

The outcomes of the product and service prioritization process should be:

- Endorsement or modification of the organization's BCM programme scope

- Identification of legal, regulatory and contractual requirements (obligations)

- Evaluation of impacts over time as it relates to a failure to deliver products/services, which serves as the justification for business continuity requirements (time, capability, quality, etc.)

- Confirmation of product and service delivery requirements (that may include time, quality, quantity, service levels, and capability specifications) following a disruptive incident that then sets the priorities for activities and resources

- Identification of processes (that deliver the products and services)

- Nomination of lead personnel to assist in the process mapping task (that is the next step in the BIA process)

- Analysis of the organization's strategic objectives, products and services, customers and other interested parties, and downtime requirements.

- Documented list of prioritized products and services (grouped by timeframe or customer, or individual).

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Process Prioritization Introduction (Overview)

- The organization should perform a process level prioritization to determine the interrelationships between internal processes and how they deliver products and services. The organization may also determine activities that make up those processes during the process prioritization task, depending on the size and complexity of the organization. In addition, the process prioritization will, later, assist the organization to develop a timetable for the recovery of activities across the organization.
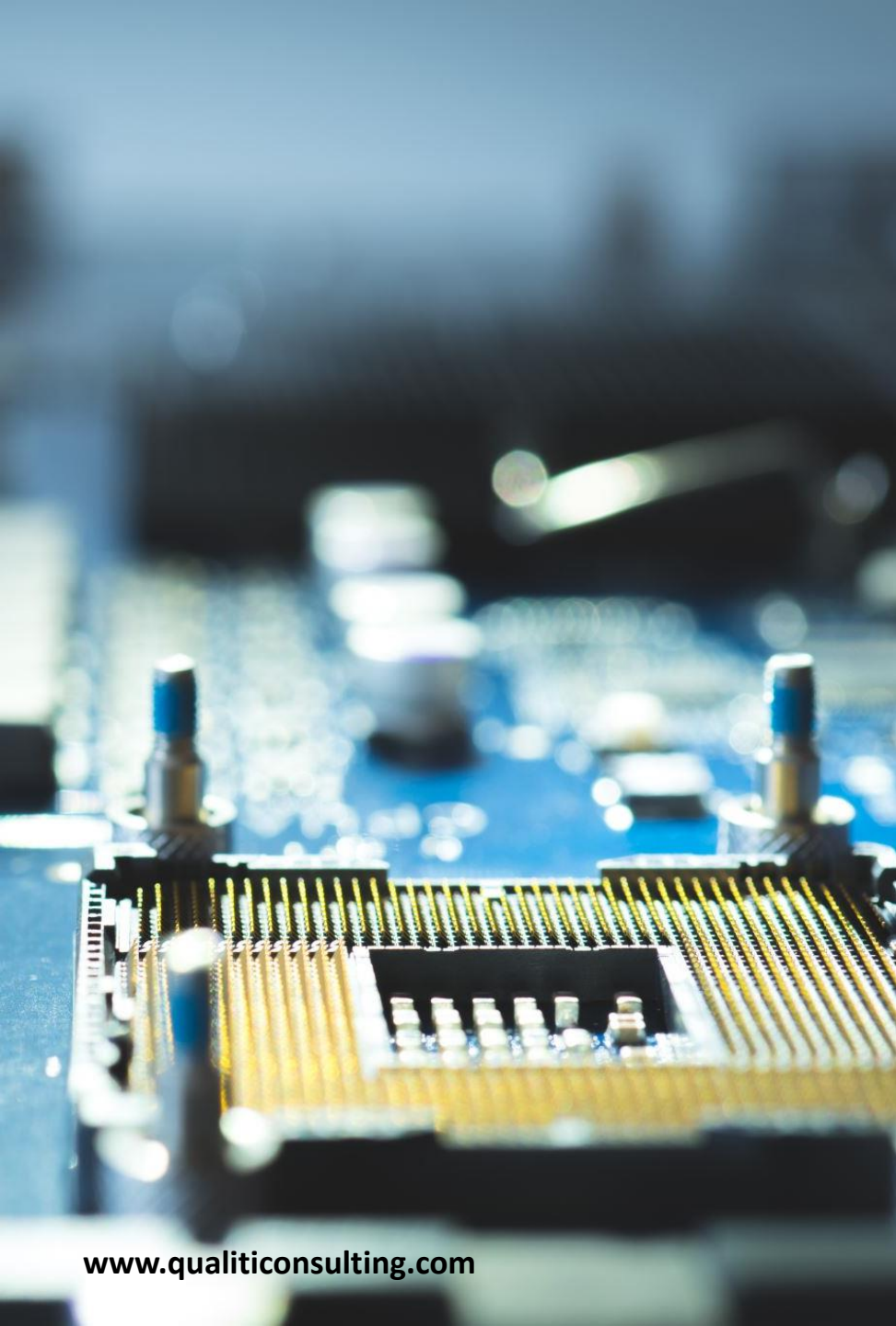
Inputs

The information required for process prioritization includes:

- The scope of this BIA process

- Product and service delivery requirements (which may include time, quality, quantity, service levels, and capability specifications)

- Processes and the products and services they deliver

- Impacts over time of a failure to deliver products and services

- legal, regulatory, and contractual requirements (obligations)

Outcomes

The outcomes of process prioritization should be:

- identification of the relationship between product and services, processes, and activities

- identification of dependencies on other business processes

- evaluation of impacts over time of a process failure

- priorities of processes

- interdependency analysis of the processes that deliver products and services to customers.

- interdependency analysis of the activities that deliver processes.

- documented list of prioritized processes that deliver products and services.

- initial documented list of activities that deliver processes

Activity Prioritization Introduction (Overview)

The organization should perform activity level prioritization to understand the resources needed to operate each activity following a disruptive incident, and to confirm the potential impact associated with a disruptive incident.

Organizations should perform activity level prioritization to obtain a detailed understanding of day-to-day resource requirements, enabling the organization to identify the resources necessary for recovery and to help confirm impact-related conclusions developed at the process level.

Resource-related information includes:

- people/skills/roles

- facilities

- equipment

- records

- financing

- information and communications technologies, including applications, data, telephony, and networks

- suppliers, third-parties, and outsource partners

- dependencies on other processes and activities

- special tools, spare parts, and consumables

- limitations imposed on resources by logistics or regulations

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Inputs

The information required to undertake activity prioritization includes:

- process, and product and service priorities

- constituent activities of processes

- scope of the BIA

- organizational chart

Information

The information required to be collected during an activity prioritization includes:

- the processes, products and services that this activity supports

- the method of operation of the activity

- the duration or lead-time of this activity

- fluctuations in demand – peak operating periods

- factors not already discovered that may affect the impact or duration of an acceptable disruption (e.g. backlogs)

Resource requirements

The resource information to be collected during an activity prioritization may include:

- Staff and contractors – minimum acceptable level for required service

- Knowledge, skills or qualifications required

- Workplace requirements – can they work from home?

- IT applications and communications (noting special requirements)

- Records – electronic or hard copy and their location

- Equipment – ICT, office equipment, manufacturing equipment

- Legal and regulatory requirements of this activity

- Components and raw materials

Interdependencies

The interdependency information required to be collected during an activity prioritization includes:

- Reliance on other internal activities or external suppliers of goods or services

- Reliance on other internal activities on the outputs of this activity

For the specification of ICT requirements additional information may be collected such as:

- ICT asset name, location, and configuration (for example, memory, capacity, processor speed, and disk drive space)

- Dependencies on other ICT assets

- End user profiles and usage characteristics

- Unique legal or regulatory requirements regarding the use of the ICT asset

Outcomes

The outcomes of activity prioritization should be:

- Confirmation of impacts over time, which serves as justification for business continuity requirements (time, capability, quality, etc.)

- Resource needs to perform each prioritized activity (including facilities, people, equipment, ICT assets, suppliers, and finance)

- Dependencies on other activities, suppliers, outsource partners, and other interested parties

- Required currency of business (operational) information or data (recovery point objective)

- Analysis of impacts over time associated with activity downtime.

- Analysis of interdependencies of the resources (and other dependencies) needed to deliver processes.

- Documented list of prioritized activities that deliver processes, and products and services.

- Documented list of prioritized resources that enable activities to operate.

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References

- ISO 22301: 2019
- ISO 22313: 2020
- ISO 22317: 2015

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