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### **During the Financial Crisis has your Company's Recovery Plan become the forgotten "stepchild"?**

Budget cuts. Layoffs. Business consolidation. Bankruptcies. Employee morale and staffing levels are at an all time low.

New projects at many companies are few and far between. Very little money is being invested in technology. Employees are working day after day to keep the existing technology and business working and hopefully profitable.

The "step child", Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plans have not been updated because the process takes time and dedication to complete. With that said the person is taken away from their day to day activities. Projects are on hold while the recovery planning project gets underway.

If there is a "disaster" at your company can you recover? What will you recover? How long will it take you to recover? Are the recovery plans still correct for Information Technology and the Business units? Are the business processes, contact information, vendor listing, recovery procedures, etc. up to date?

I hate to be such a negative person but give it some thought. Are you well prepared to recover? Is the answer yes? If it is then you can stop reading and sit back and congratulate yourself for a job well done. If the answer is no, then read on and let me try to assist you with this endeavor.

Break recovery planning down into small manageable pieces. The pieces are:

- **Gap Analysis:** Review your existing DR/BC preparedness to identify and evaluate your current recovery activities versus desired state to find out where you are now and where you need to be. Create a report for management with an executive summary that will outline recommendations for corrective actions or enhancements where appropriate. Priority should be given to items requiring immediate attention.
- **Risk Assessment:** Perform a Risk Assessment to identify risk exposures which could result in a business interruption or disaster to your business functions and facilities.
- **Business Impact Analysis:** Perform a BIA to determine the effect of an interruption of services on each business unit and the organization as a whole. The BIA report should provide information on the short and long term effects of a disaster on such factors as sales, profit, market share, and goodwill, customer/member confidence, etc.

- **Strategy Analysis:** A Strategy Analysis is based on recovery of essential business functions. The analysis should encompass the restoration of telecommunications and Information Technology infrastructures to cost effectively satisfy company requirements.
- **IT Disaster Recovery Plans / Business Unit plans:** Create or update your strategy surrounding the planning for disruptions to the business units as well as the IT environment. The update or development and implementation of this methodology will insure integrity of recovery and effectiveness.
- **Testing and Maintenance:** Testing the plans will validate, discover, and remedy any inadequacies or errors in the plan. A tabletop test of the plan will allow a “quick” evaluation of the plans that are in place. A project plan can then be defined to update plans and place the plans into a defined maintenance schedule.
- **Pandemic Planning:** Are you prepared to possibly lose 30 to 40 % of your day to day workforce? While the risk of a pandemic is known, the severity will be unknown until it is over. Do you have enough remote capabilities to allow employees to work remotely? Do you have flexible HR policies in place, emergency kits, masks, hand sanitizers, etc. in office areas?

Nobody wants to believe that a disaster will strike them. Everyone wants to believe that they have a solid and thoroughly tested recovery plan. But a little preparation will go a long way in making a “disaster” a little more than just a business interruption.

I hope these topics will give you the foundation to not forget about your “step child”. Step Children need love and nurturing also.