10.1 Evaluate and Enhance Your Strengths

You can use a computer spreadsheet, or a simple grid like the one shown in Table 10-1, to help maintain a clear picture of your preparedness strengths and your ideas for enhancing them. List your foreseeable risks. Now match them with the policies, procedures, and other controls you have in place, keeping in mind that each one might apply to several of the risks you have identified. Then add the enhancements you can make right now. We will discuss developing entirely new controls and procedures in the next chapter; don't worry about the new controls for now.

Table 10-1. Tool for Evaluating Controls

Foreseeable Risk	Existing Controls	Enhancement of Controls	New Controls
Workplace violence	EAP, guard service	Lower EAP violence warning threshold, etc.	Emergency communication plan
Earthquake	Command center, etc.	Additional moniors and recorders	Off-site command center
Loss of critical information	IT manager, backups, etc.	Retain "hacker consultant," etc.	Periodic hacker testing

10.2 Leverage Your Strengths to Enhance Preparedness

Leveraging – investing the least amount of time, money, and effort in order to yield the greatest possible return – always makes good business sense. That's true of preparation for crises as well.

An effective preparedness strategy will require time, money, and effort, but the best investment you can make is in clear thinking. If you don't have a single extra dollar to spend today, you can still make progress by addressing questions of time, money, and effort.

10.2.1 Time

◗ How soon do you want your preparations to be comprehensive and current?

◗ Who in the organization will champion your plan, and how much time should that person realistically devote to the project?

◗ How many others should be involved, and how much time will the plan demand from each of them?

10.4 What You Should Look For:
Clear Strategy and Good Tactics

When a crisis strikes, you get only one chance to respond. You have to be prepared to do it right – the first time.

> **A valid plan is one that actually accomplishes what it was designed to do. A reliable one can be counted on to work successfully in response to repeated challenges.**

If you critique your plans for clarity as to both strategy and tactics, you'll go a long way toward ensuring that you are ready. You need to keep the differences between them clearly in mind – and not mistake one for the other. This is why we recommend a three-tiered preparedness approach with separate, but integrated, plans and teams at the executive, managerial, and tactical/site levels. Your strategy must be a comprehensive plan, and your tactics must be valid and reliable methods of implementation. A valid plan is one that actually accomplishes what it was designed to do. A reliable one can be counted on to work successfully in response to repeated challenges.

Suppose you have identified workplace violence, from a deranged and armed employee for instance, as a possible risk your company faces. In response, your strategy might be to put in place specific systems, like an employee assistance program (EAP), and controls, like security guards. The EAP and the guards are tactics you have chosen to address your anti-violence strategy.

US Postal Service (USPS)
Workplace Violence Strategy

Most people know the huge problem USPS had in the past with employees committing mass murders in postal facilities. Over a 23-year period, USPS experienced shootings mostly by employees or ex-employees in Alabama, Georgia, Oklahoma (2 times), Louisiana, California (5 times), New Jersey and Michigan (2 times each), Nevada, Florida, and Oregon.

Out of necessity, USPS took workplace violence seriously and implemented a comprehensive workplace violence program (United States Postal Service, 2009). With as many as 785,000 employees at the time, the postal service went approximately eight years without another employee-perpetrated shooting.

Lessons-learned: Much like establishing a crisis management program, the USPS strategic decision to implement a comprehensive prevention, preparedness, and response program mitigated the problem in an outstanding manner.