

Full protection of the whole business can come only from the completion of all three phases at all four levels, but the advantage of offering a degree of choice will make it much easier for you to obtain buy-in. Furthermore, each of the tasks can be seen to deliver a distinct degree of protection or resilience. You can demonstrate that progress is being made with a series of visible deliverables, revealed at regular intervals. This approach is generally more attractive than one where everybody has to wait a long time before they see any substantial result.

In many ways, BCM is an almost endless learning curve because throughout the entire program you will be gaining insights, learning lessons, and applying them. It is a continuous series of improvements derived from analyzing what is known, understanding what is possible, and preparing for what is likely.

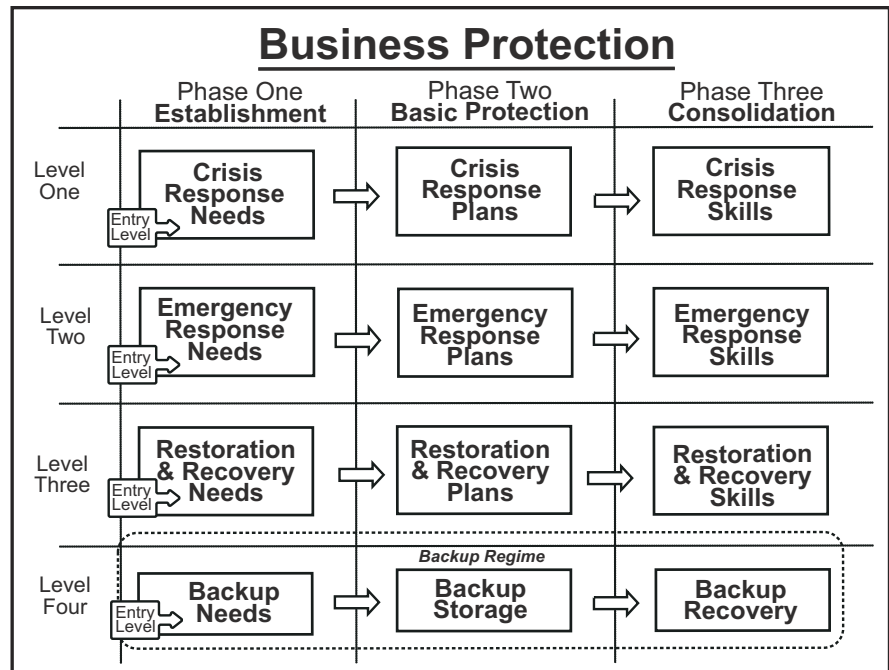


Figure 1-3. BCM Process Model with a Choice of Entry Points and Optional Work Patterns

## 1.4 Six Disruptive Scenarios (What Can Go Wrong)

BC works on the assumption that certain effects can and will happen, irrespective of the actual cause. It is based on considerations about a range of possibilities which may be completely unpredictable but do need to be treated pragmatically. You should also bear in mind that BC is principally concerned with protecting, and sustaining, what should be happening at a tactical or operational level rather than the rather more philosophic and intangible aspects of policies, strategies, and values.

**The focus is on the noticeable effects rather than the obscure causes of an incident...**

In order to prepare for almost any eventuality it helps if you can categorize those eventualities. Then you can address the categories rather than prepare to deal with each and every one of the many and varied abnormalities which might intrude upon the business operation. From a BC perspective, I assert that there are only six disruptive scenarios which you need to plan for. Once the incident has occurred, the precise cause is irrelevant, but you must have a strategy which covers the ensuing effects.

### 1.4.1 The Six Essential Elements

Six essential business elements combine to enable the cash flow, or income stream, which drives and sustains the typical enterprise. Most of the things that can, and do, go wrong, and all business disasters, crises, or interruptions, are variants of those six scenarios, which we will discuss in detail later in this chapter. *If you and your organization are prepared to deal with these six generic circumstances, you will be able to recover from any business disaster.*

Three *physical* disruptive scenarios you need to prepare for are:

1. Loss of access.
2. Loss of people.
3. Loss of supplies.

Three *technical* disruptive scenarios you need to prepare for are:

1. Loss of communication.
2. Loss of function.
3. Loss of data.

Like many of my colleagues, I had accepted without question some of the traditional beliefs about the causes of disasters, their effects, and the subsequent consequences. However, after reviewing some of the materials I had used over the years, I saw the possibilities of a new model. This model, presented here for the first time in Figure 1-4 below, provides a clear, practical foundation for your preparation and planning. The focus is on the noticeable effects rather than the obscure causes of an incident. As the BC manager, you will be responsible for working out how to contain the effects and thus reduce the consequences.

All businesses depend upon some form of cash flow for their continued existence. Most commercial enterprises will be engaged in activities which result in a positive cash flow in return for the delivery of its goods or services. Governmental and charitable bodies may be expected to dispense goods and services in a form of outbound or negative cash flow. In either case an interruption to the delivery results in a loss or a drain on the cash reserves. If this situation is not addressed in time, then the business is at risk of losing its income and without funds it will soon be forced to close its operation. By focusing on effects, rather than causes, you will be adopting a similar viewpoint to that of a doctor who prescribes a course of action, or medication, to deal with the symptoms and reduce any long term consequences. The actual cause is mainly of academic interest. The patient is not particularly interested in whether it was a virus, a bacterium, or a toxin that caused the swelling and the pain – she wants to be able to relax and get to sleep at night.

In essence, these six disruptive scenarios are those situations that are liable to cause the unexpected and detrimental loss of your essential business elements. We can regard them in two groups: three physical types of disruption and three technical types of disruption which need to be addressed. Any effective BCM program needs to cover each of these disruptive scenarios. Also, bear in mind that you could lose more than one of these elements at the same time. This could be a direct result of the initial cause or it could be a domino effect in which the outcome of one difficult situation leads to another problem.

## 1.4.2 Physical Disruption

**Loss of access** is the category which covers all those circumstances where personnel are denied access to premises or facilities. This might include anything from an earthquake which has destroyed the premises to a storm which has damaged the property or a broken key that won't open the door. The BC plan has to provide a solution which is likely to involve access to alternative facilities or, in some instances, an instant repair capability.

**Loss of people** means that personnel are unable or unwilling to carry out their normal tasks. This might be due to absence caused by sickness or injury or they may have withdrawn their labor for some reason or cause which they subscribe to. Other possible problems include extreme weather conditions, lack of transport, changes of circumstance, violence on the streets, or a blockade. BC plans need to cover this eventuality through the use of alternative or temporary people who may require specific training or qualifications. Detailed working instructions and scripts might also be required to support such plans.

**Loss of supplies** means a shortage of ingredients or materials to support the production and delivery of normal goods and services. This may be caused by damage to existing stocks or the storage area where they are held. Such problems can be due to extreme weather conditions, power failure leading to loss of heat or cold, flooding, or fire. Loss of supplies may also be due to a failure within the supply chain causing stock to be delayed or not delivered. BC plans need to ensure the timely supply of all such materials under emergency conditions. This may entail pre-arranged purchase orders, alternate suppliers, or comprehensive shopping lists. The details of the arrangements will vary according to the urgency, volumes, and uniqueness of the supplies involved.

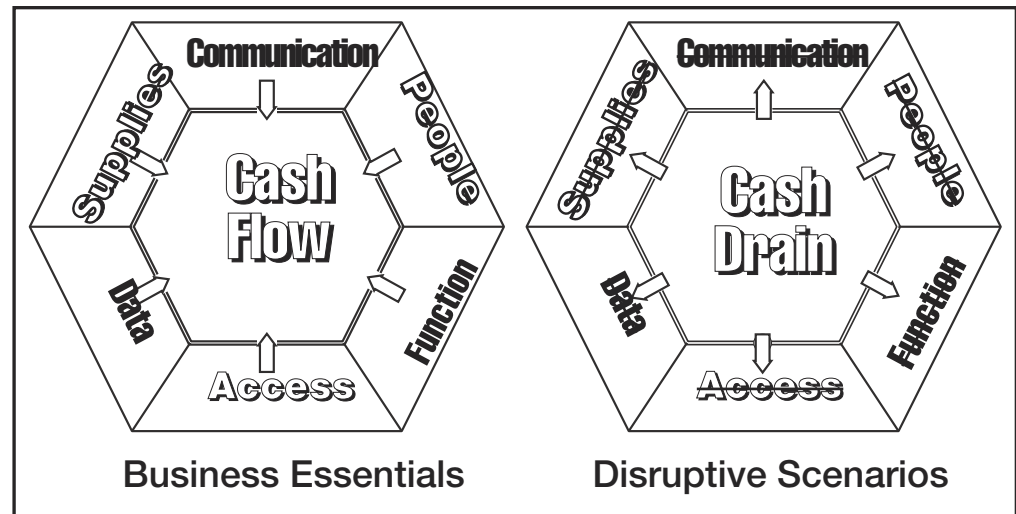


Figure 1-4. Six Disruptive Scenarios Can Cause Loss of Essential Business Elements

### 1.4.3 Technical Disruption

**Loss of communication** describes the situation in which some or all of the important communication systems become ineffective or corrupted for whatever reason. This may be caused by storm damage, power outage, flooding, or problems with service providers. It is also possible that authorities may wish to limit or shut down the services in a particular area. This especially applies to mobile phone networks. Satellite and landline communications are rather more difficult to control.

**Loss of function** occurs whenever an important item of equipment is out of service for some reason. This might be due to poor maintenance, unscheduled maintenance, power failure, accidental damage, vandalism, or the equipment may simply be unavailable or unusable for some reason. Perhaps the lease has run out or the certificate of assurance has expired. BC plans should cover this situation, typically by providing, or enabling access to, alternative equipment. Another solution might be to outsource the related activity while the original equipment is restored.

**Loss of data** is any situation where one or more functions of the business are unable to access important information. This might be due to some form of technical or system failure which renders the data inaccessible. It could also be caused by corruption somewhere within a database which renders the data unusable or unreliable. Critical information which the business depends on for current activities may be missing, incomplete, or inaccessible. BC plans must address these possibilities and establish means to recapture, retrieve, or replace the missing information.

While there may be literally thousands of causes for a disaster and hundreds of possible consequences, your BC plan has to deal effectively with only these six disruptive scenarios: loss of access, people, supplies, communication, function, and data. Furthermore, the plan needs to offer guidelines only, rather than detailed directions, except where particular procedures require specific instructions. Remember that a BC