

# ESSENTIALS OF OPERATION

With COVID-19 rapidly evolving, organisations are turning their minds to business continuity. Many businesses are finding they are not well prepared and are seeking guidance or reassurance on how to prepare.

This guide is for organisations that do not have a Business Continuity Plan or want to update it for COVID-19. It is a starter guide to help you and your team to work through your priority operations and what is needed to keep them running.

This guide builds on our [Business Continuity Planning Guide for Covid19](#). If you have not already read it, we recommend you go there now, before continuing. In particular, the section on taking appropriate actions to reduce the risks to staff and customers is a first step in protecting your business and the wider community.

This guide can be adapted for different sizes and types of organisation. The first part of the guide focuses on keeping your core operations running. The second part contains questions to guide your response to decline in demand, loss of revenue or increased costs.

#### **Need further assistance?**

Please get in touch to find out more about our services and how we can help you and your specific needs.

Knowing what is essential to keep your organisation going and how to get it is the core of a Business Continuity Plan.

## STEP 1: IDENTIFYING YOUR PRIORITY SERVICES

In a pandemic, you may not have sufficient resources to be able to deliver all of your normal services.

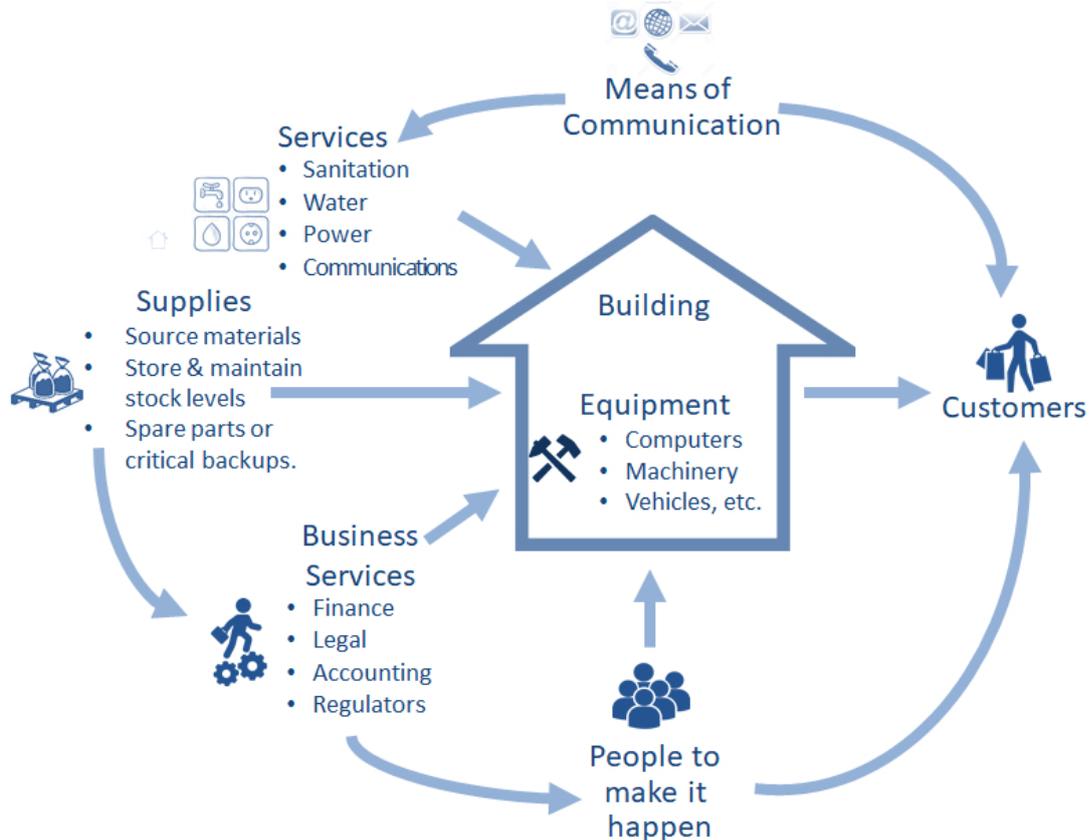
- Which are the absolute priorities?
- Within what time-frame do other activities become a priority?

**Start by making a priority ordered list of your services.**

## STEP 2: HOW YOU DELIVER YOUR PRIORITY SERVICES

In broad terms, what are the core things your organisation needs to do to deliver your priority services? For example, pay staff, communicate with customers, deliver products, maintain staff health and safety, etc.

**Make a list for your business or draw a diagram, like the one below, for your business**



## STEP 3: THE CRITICAL INGREDIENTS - DEVELOPING PLAN B

For the core things your organisation needs:

- What are the critical ingredients to make these happen?
- How may these be affected by COVID-19?
- Plan B: how else can you obtain or provide these essential services?
- What actions do you need to take now to enable that to happen?

Suggestions:

- When thinking about Plan B, think about alternative ways to perform essential services. For example, are you able to obtain services externally or share resources with neighbouring businesses or others in your industry?
- In some cases, you may need to have a plan C or D as well. For example, if an essential member of staff becomes ill, others working nearby may also be infected and soon become unavailable or require self-isolation.
- Think widely about who may be able to assist, for example, recently retired staff (provided this does not increase their potential exposure), competitors, or even customers.

### Example for Payroll Services

CRITICAL INPUT	POTENTIAL COVID-19 IMPACT	PLAN B	ACTION
<b>PAYROLL ADMINISTRATOR*</b>	Unwell and unable to work.  Still well but requires self-isolation due to exposure.	Office manager does payroll  Payroll administrator works from home.	Ensure office manager trained / up to date with system.  Investigate whether has suitable computer and able to access payroll remotely without compromising payroll security.
<b>TIMESHEET APPROVALS</b>	Timesheets late or not approved on time.	Cascading one up approvals if immediate supervisor unwell.  If not available or approved on time, run previous payroll and adjust in next pay round.	Ensure all supervisors and managers aware and prepared.  None.

\* This may apply to many personnel.

# DELEGATED AUTHORITIES

Who can make decisions for your organisation if the normal leaders are not there? To ensure the continuity of your operations, you need a plan that enables others in your organisation to make decisions.

When thinking about who might step up to help your business through crises, always consider whether they may have greater responsibilities outside your organisation.

For example, if one of your employees is a volunteer emergency responder, you need to ensure you have cover for their role.

In crises there are often issues you need to address quickly and effectively. To survive a crisis and thrive in your day-to-day business your organisation needs to be capable of effective decision making.

Ultimately, the goal is for your team to be OK to make decisions that are good for the organisation. Your ability to trust in other people's decisions will be improved if you all have a very clear understanding of the organisation's goals.

Think about

- What key decisions may need to be made?
- Who can make these decision?
- What are the core principles that every decision should align with (e.g. preserve health and safety, reputation, etc)?

# WHAT IF DEMAND DROPS?

Many organisations are experiencing huge uncertainty in demand.

Here are some key tips to help navigate through this:

<b>Involve Your Staff</b>	<p>Keeping your employees informed should be one of your top priorities. Be open about how you see the situation and take your team on the journey with you.</p> <p>Encourage staff to bring and discuss ideas. Often intuition and group discussion can lead to novel ideas to help get your business through.</p>
<b>Review Your Finances</b>	<p>Forecast the potential impacts on your cashflow including a worst case. Talk to your professional advisors and/or lenders.</p> <p>Start considering what may be the key triggers for major decisions. Be open to closure as a means to preserve capital.</p> <p>Check your eligibility for support from the government's economic response package.</p>
<b>Innovate</b>	<p>What could your business do differently?</p> <p>Can you find alternative customers or offer different products or services that are likely to have more demand?</p> <p>What's booming currently e.g. delivery services, telecommunications, ICT? What is likely to be in demand in two months' time?</p> <p>Does your business have particular strengths that could be temporarily redeployed to service these opportunities?</p> <p>Could you temporarily redploy staff to other businesses in need?</p>
<b>Take Care Of Yourself</b>	<p>These are incredibly challenging times. Ensure you are sharing the load – even if that requires a video conference to do so.</p> <p>Practice your five ways to wellbeing (see below) and encourage your staff to do the same.</p>

