

Example – Disaster Recovery TEST Plan

Testing is the crux to creating and preserving a viable recovery plan. One popular way of starting a testing program is a table top exercise. This approach is cost effective and focuses on your employees and their specific recovery tasks. This checklist will guide you through steps and suggestions to plan and facilitate a successful table top exercise.

✓	Item	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify team for table top exercise	Be sure key decision makers are involved, whether they are participants, or their absence is written into the scenario.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Establish a crisis command center	The location of the table top exercise - conference bridges are recommended for remote parties to dial into. All information gathered will also be stored in this location.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Log all activities	Appoint a scribe to document actions and open items for later review.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Determine scenario	In doing so, be creative but practical. Take your risk assessment into consideration, and consider what will be appropriate based upon time allotted for this exercise.
<input type="checkbox"/>	List assumptions	This includes closed roadways, key personnel that are absent, extent of damage and outages, expected duration of outages, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rules for the exercise	Clearly define which actions will be taken vs. assumed since there isn't time to do each step in real-time that would be taken in a recovery.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Split the scenario into sessions	Make these time-appropriate for the overall time of the exercise. After each session the participants/observers will review and document what was learned. With each session you can pose a new list of assumptions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	What critical business functions were affected?	From the assumptions, the participants should identify which functions are crippled, and how to meet recovery time objectives for each function. This will assist in prioritizing what functions to recover first.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vendors	Will your third party vendors: phone service, IT, data back-up, facilities, etc. be involved in this exercise? If so, make sure you provide them with adequate notice related to their responsibilities in the exercise. If not, write into the rules how vendors will be simulated.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Time frame	At the beginning of each session, clearly define the number of hours participants have to work on each session as well as how much time passes in 'exercise time' compared to 'real time'.