# CERT'S PODCASTS: SECURITY FOR BUSINESS LEADERS: SHOW NOTES

## Train for the Unexpected

**Key Message:** Being able to respond effectively when faced with a disruptive event requires that staff members learn to become more resilient.

**Executive Summary**

As is the case for firefighters and emergency response personnel, employees, including senior leaders, need to learn how to become resilient at a personal level so they are prepared to deal with the unexpected when a disruptive event occurs. Training and awareness need to be baked into the organization’s business continuity and operational resiliency programs so that training offerings and activities are part of normal, day-to-day operations. To ensure a training program will stick and will stay relevant, you need to follow a defined process and ensure that every actual event includes a post-mortem evaluation to identify gaps and improvements.

In this podcast, Matt Meyer, vice president and business continuity manager with Marshall and Ilsley Corporation, discusses an effective process for ensuring that training and awareness for business continuity and operational resiliency meet business needs. This includes determining, up front, how offerings will be tracked and measured.

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**PART 1: STEERING COMMITTEE SPONSORSHIP; RISK-DRIVEN TRAINING TOPICS**

**Get Leaders On Board**

The first step is to make sure senior leaders are fully behind the business continuity (BC) and resiliency program itself.

Once they understand the scope of the entire program, the types of training required, and how this will reduce risk at the bottom line, they see training as an integral part of the overall program, not as an add-on.

**A Committed Steering Committee**

The steering committee is optimally made up of senior managers across the organization that represent all of the key lines of business as well as critical support groups. Given their familiarity with the BC program, they naturally buy in to training.

By ensuring that training is woven into the overall program, it then gets approved and carried as part of the program versus needing annual approval.

**Evaluate Training Needs in a Risk Context**

You need to step back and look at the entire BC program to determine training needs and the type of training that will fulfill these, for example, hands-on, computer-based, or webinars.

Given that all training needs cannot be immediately met, areas of greatest risk are identified to prioritize which training needs should be tackled first.

Use the same process here as you use for making any business investment decision.

**High Premium on Life and Human Assets**

Senior managers and employees immediately see the benefit of evacuation drills (getting out, how to assemble, where to assemble, how to be accounted for). They know they need to clearly understand the roles that they each play to ensure everyone's safety during a disruptive event. The immediate payback is obvious when an event occurs.

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## PART 2: INVOLVE KEY STAKEHOLDERS; FOLLOW A DEFINED PROCESS; COLLECT METRICS

### Key Internal Stakeholders

Key internal stakeholders include

- senior management and the steering committee who demonstrate ongoing, visible sponsorship and support
- everyone involved in an evacuation drill
- floor captains/floor wardens who are responsible for helping people get out of the building
- regional crisis management teams who are responsible for managing crisis situations for their geographical region

### Work with Internal Stakeholders

The corporate BC team visits each of the regions to ensure they understand their roles and responsibilities. This includes conducting table top exercises that illustrate what they need to do when an event occurs.

Training includes workstations recovery exercises.

### Key External Stakeholders

The need to involve external stakeholders is sometimes overlooked. External stakeholders include

- fire department
- police department
- vendors, particularly for technology recovery exercises
- public-private partnerships such as the Southeast Wisconsin Homeland Security Partnership
- any other high-level emergency response people and organizations

### Use a Defined Process

Process steps for an effective training program are as follows

- Obtain the sponsorship and support of senior leaders.
- Identify which training opportunities will meet the stated business need and provide the most value to the organization and its employees.
- Determine the specific training activity that is the best fit.
- Develop the training.
- Determine how the training will be tracked and measured. Be able to answer the question, "Is the training meeting the business need?"
- Make sure the training ROI (return on investment) demonstrates both a benefit to the organization and a reduction of risk for a specific area of the business.
- Maintain the training including reflecting the experience and lessons learned from actual events.

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## PART 3: ASSESS BASED ON ACTUAL EVENTS; TRAIN FOR THE UNEXPECTED

### Keep Training Fresh and Relevant

Prior to commencing any new training activity, make sure to capture a good baseline against which you can benchmark.

Performance data can be based on student feedback or, more importantly, from how the organization performs during an actual event.

Events provide opportunities to identify training gaps and improvements.

**Event Post-Mortems Baked into the Process**

After every event (even something simple like a fire drill evacuation due to burning popcorn in the microwave), assemble all floor captains to ensure the evacuation worked as planned and that all people were accounted for. For example, make sure people went to their assembly locations instead of Starbucks.

Be able to answer the question, “Where in our evacuation drill did we miss the board, and how can we address this in our training?”

Getting the right people together immediately after an event takes discipline and a commitment to following a defined process (versus just an ad hoc action or a good idea). This can be challenging as people often feel they don’t have the time immediately after an event.

**The Role of Training and Awareness in Becoming Resilient**

The need to practice is best illustrated by a case in point—the extent to which firefighters and fire departments practice, with the end objective of being resilient.

While they are trained in a wide range of exercises, every fire is different. Firefighters need to be prepared to expect the unexpected and be resilient themselves, so they know what to do when they arrive on the scene.

The private sector needs to take the same approach when building awareness and training employees.

Being resilient means

- walking into a given situation, asking the right questions, and getting the right people involved
- assessing and quickly identifying the issues
- working through the issues
- understanding what actions will be most effective

**Sources of Fresh Ideas**

Network with people involved in business continuity and operational resiliency. Find out what has worked and what hasn’t, and tailor relevant recommendation for your organization’s culture.

Get involved in local public and private partnerships.

Examine the practices used in related disciplines such as firefighting, emergency response, and public health at the local, city, state, and federal levels. This may include procedures, processes, and training.

**Resources**

CERT Resiliency Management Model, specifically the Organizational Training and Awareness process area.