

# Business Continuity Management Gap Analysis Framework

A comprehensive Gap Analysis for Business Continuity Management (BCM) systematically compares the organization's current BCM program against a chosen standard (like ISO 22301) or best practices. The goal is to identify weaknesses and opportunities for improvement.



## Elements of BCM to Review in a Gap Analysis

1. BCM Program & Governance: The foundation—policies, roles, responsibilities, and management oversight.
2. Business Impact Analysis (BIA) & Risk Assessment: The core analytical components that drive strategy.
3. BCM Strategies & Solutions: The selected approaches for continuity and recovery.
4. BCM Plans & Procedures: The documented, actionable response plans (BCP, DRP, Crisis Management, etc.).
5. Exercising, Testing & Maintenance: The validation and upkeep of the BCM program.
6. Culture, Training & Awareness: The human element and organizational competence.

7. Performance Evaluation & Continuous Improvement: The mechanisms for monitoring and improving the program.

## **The Five Most Important Assessment Criteria for Each Element**

These criteria are universal and should be applied to each of the elements above.

1. Existence & Completeness:
    - What it measures: Whether the element is formally established and all its necessary components are present. It's a binary starting point—do we have it or not?
    - Assessment Questions: Is there a documented BIA? Are recovery strategies defined? Are there formal plans? Is a training curriculum in place?
  2. Adequacy & Effectiveness:
    - What it measures: The quality, appropriateness, and practical utility of the element. It goes beyond mere existence to ask, "Is it fit for purpose?"
    - Assessment Questions: Do the recovery strategies truly meet Recovery Time Objectives (RTOs)? Are the plans detailed and actionable enough for a real crisis? Do tests realistically challenge the plans?
  3. Integration & Alignment:
    - What it measures: How well the element is connected to the organization's overall operations, risk management, and other related frameworks (like IT DR, Security, Quality).
    - Assessment Questions: Is the BIA updated with major business changes? Are BC roles embedded in job descriptions? Are BC plans referenced in vendor contracts?
  4. Currency & Maintenance:
    - What it measures: Whether the element is up-to-date and subject to a defined review cycle. BCM is not a "set and forget" activity.
    - Assessment Questions: When was the BIA last validated? Are plan contact lists updated quarterly? Are test results used to update procedures?
  5. Competence & Awareness:
    - What it measures: The level of understanding, training, and preparedness of personnel regarding their roles within the BCM element.
    - Assessment Questions: Do plan owners understand their duties? Are crisis team members trained on communication tools? Are staff aware of evacuation and work-from-home procedures?
-

## Application Example: BCM Strategies & Solutions

Here's how you would apply the five criteria to this specific element:

- 1. Existence & Completeness: Are recovery strategies formally documented for all critical activities identified in the BIA? (Gap: Strategies are only defined for IT systems, not for key business processes like payroll or customer service.)
- 2. Adequacy & Effectiveness: Do the technical and operational solutions realistically achieve the stated RTOs and Recovery Point Objectives (RPOs)? (Gap: The agreed RTO is 4 hours, but the manual workaround solution takes 2 days to implement.)
- 3. Integration & Alignment: Are the continuity strategies aligned with the organization's risk appetite and budget? Are they coordinated with IT Disaster Recovery plans? (Gap: IT has contracted for a hot site, but the business strategy assumes a 72-hour cold start.)
- 4. Currency & Maintenance: Are strategies reviewed annually or after significant changes to technology or processes? (Gap: Strategies haven't been reviewed since a major cloud migration 18 months ago.)
- 5. Competence & Awareness: Do the personnel responsible for executing the workaround or alternate site solutions know how to perform them? (Gap: The team trained on the manual process has since left the company.)