

# Develop a Business Continuity Plan

Streamline the traditional approach to make BCP development manageable and repeatable.

THIS WILL HELP SENIOR IT MANAGERS WHO ARE:

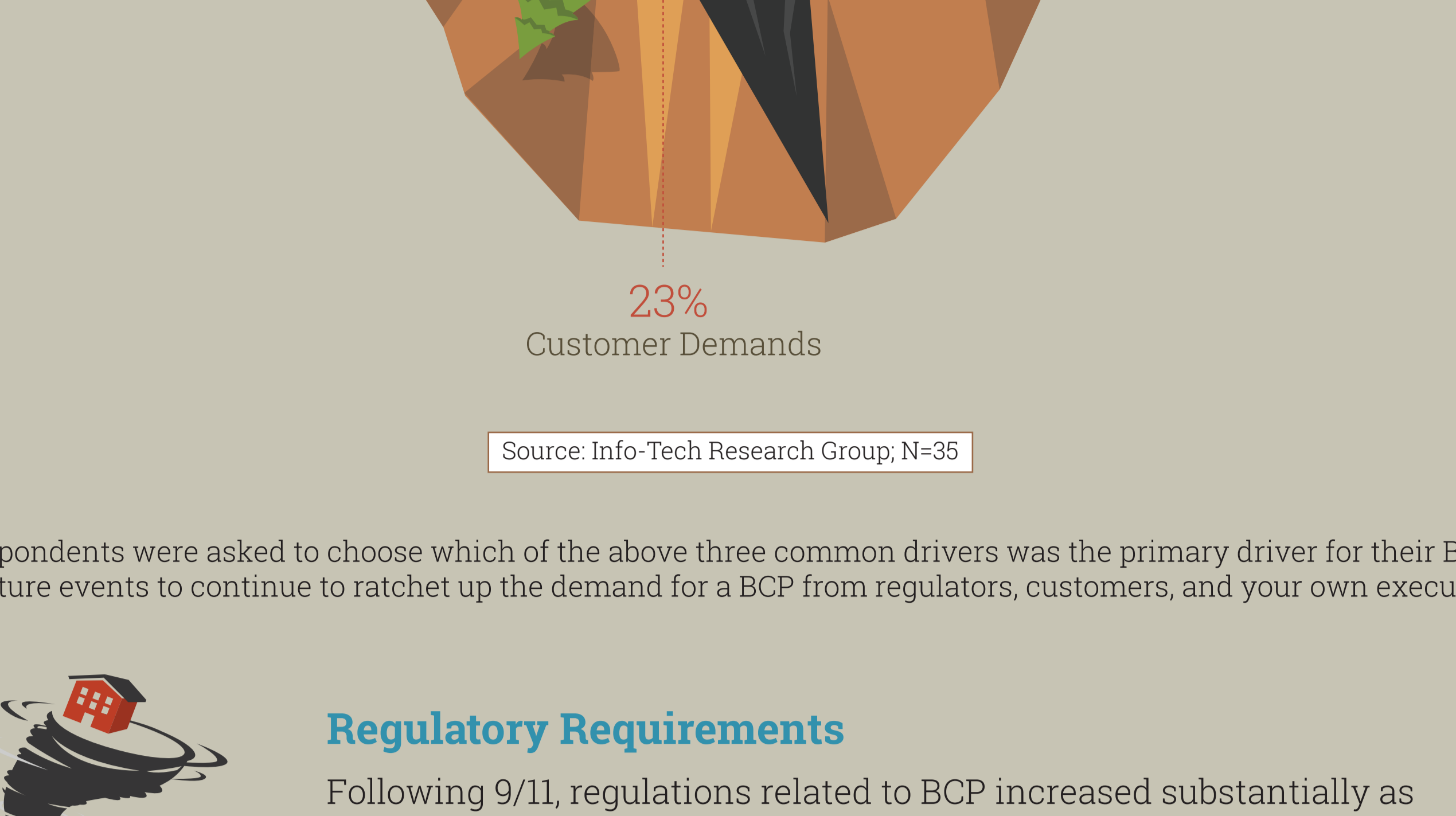
Under pressure to develop a Business Continuity Plan (BCP).

Able to improve their standing by spearheading BCP.

Assisting business leaders to develop a BCP.

**Note:** Although BCP should be in the domain of the business, IT leaders are often tasked with BCP development. This project advice will help both IT and non-IT leaders streamline BCP development.

## BCP Drivers



Survey respondents were asked to choose which of the above three common drivers was the primary driver for their BCP project. Expect future events to continue to ratchet up the demand for a BCP from regulators, customers, and your own executive team.

### Regulatory Requirements

Following 9/11, regulations related to BCP increased substantially as industry and government organizations recognized the potential impact of major events and the inadequacy of existing BCPs. More recently, Hurricane Sandy has increased the attention to BCP.

### Customer Demands

Organizations are demanding that suppliers and service providers have a BCP as a requirement to do business, and many will require an audit as proof that the BCP is functional.

### Internal Mandates

Natural disasters often serve as a wake-up call for business executives regarding the importance of having a BCP. Hurricane Sandy, with its widespread impact on what is arguably the economic center of the world, has been perhaps the biggest wake-up call since 9/11 and has driven more organizations to make BCP a priority.

## BCP Challenges

Developing a BCP is perhaps the largest and most complex project management challenge an organization will take on, as it affects all lines of business.

### I have to go beyond IT considerations.



### I am dependent on resources over which I have no authority.

I need input from resources (e.g. business leaders) who are not incented to worry about DR events; they're incented to generate revenue.

I have to coordinate input from multiple departments.



I need to create a BCP that satisfies regulatory requirements, customer demands, and internal mandates.

STREAMLINE THE TRADITIONAL BCP APPROACH TO KEEP THE PROJECT MANAGEABLE.

### Traditional Business Continuity Management (BCM Lifecycle)

Build BCM one layer at a time across the organization. This can be an effective approach if you have dedicated staff or hire a consulting team to drive the project, but a massive project to undertake on a part-time basis.

- Establish a BCM program
- Risk assessment for the organization
- Business impact analysis across all business units to determine recovery objectives
- Design solutions to close gaps and achieve recovery objectives
- Implement and validate organization-wide incident response/contingency plans
- Embed business continuity awareness into day-to-day practices through training and testing

### Streamlined Approach Starts With a BCP Pilot

Focus on developing the BCP one business unit at a time, which then drives ongoing BCM for the organization.

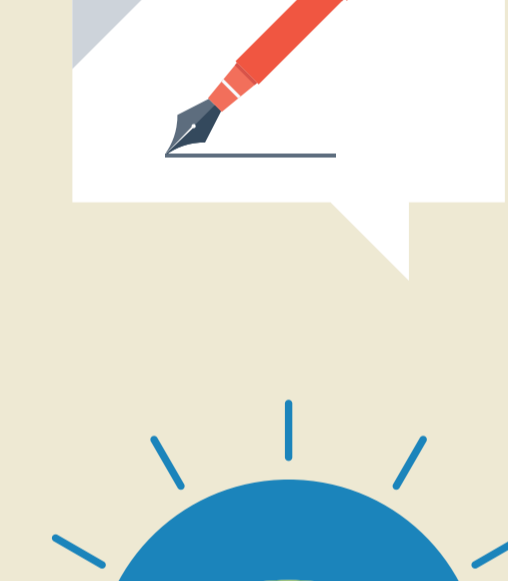
- BCP pilot project charter: Obtain executive sponsorship. Define IT vs. business roles and project parameters.
- BCP pilot (single business unit): Focus the BCP process (BIA, gap analysis, incident response plans) on one business unit to keep it manageable.
- Leverage the pilot to establish BCM: Clarify time and resources required to continue with remaining business units and establish ongoing BCM.
- BCP for remaining business units: Repeat the pilot methodology for each remaining business unit.
- Align BCP and IT DRP: Align business unit BCPs, and update your DRP to meet BCP requirements.



Focus on resilience more than risk mitigation. You can't predict (and therefore specifically mitigate) every possible risk.



Avoid the typical scenario planning approach that calls for a separate plan for each "what-if" scenario. Instead, develop one plan that can be adapted to different scenarios, which also reduces the effort to maintain your BCP.



The traditional approach to BCP is a massive project that most organizations can't execute without hiring a consultant. To execute BCP in-house, start with a small BCP pilot to establish the methodology and create a template that the rest of the organization can follow.



BCP requires identifying current business functions – leverage this task to also uncover inefficiencies and optimize business processes.

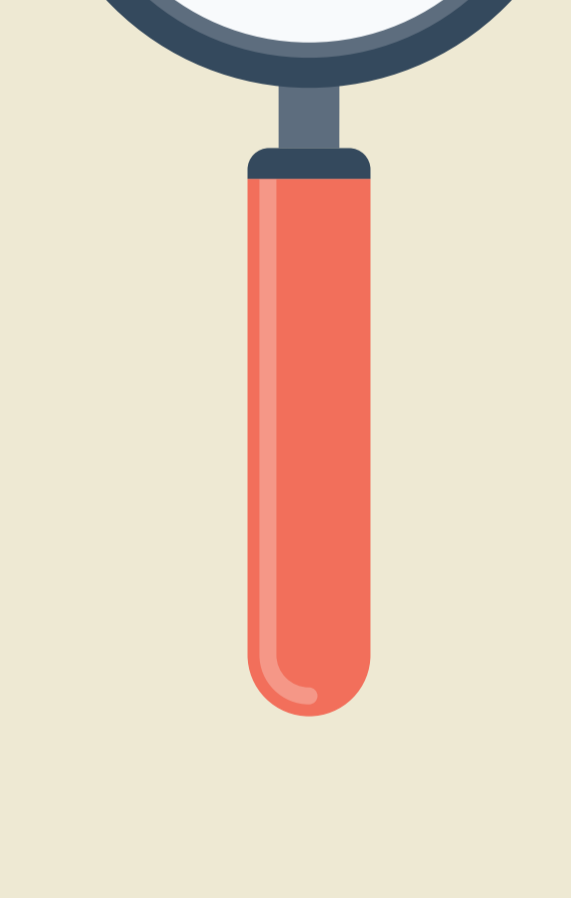
## STEPS FOR SUCCESS

### 1 Define the BCP pilot project parameters

The pilot is as much about seeding success as it is implementing a methodology. Select a pilot business unit that is more process-driven, which simplifies identifying business functions and dependencies; identify a BCP Coordinator who can ensure post-pilot continuity; and define pilot deliverables.

### 2 Identify business processes and dependencies

- Policies and procedures manuals, if they exist, are often out of date or incomplete. Use these as a starting point. Identify the "go-to" staff members who are well-versed in how the business unit runs and interview them to identify the informal and undocumented processes.
- If processes are not documented, use this as an opportunity to create standard operating procedures (SOPs) to drive consistency and process optimization, as described in the Info-Tech blueprint "Create Visual SOP Documents that Drive Process Optimization, Not Just Peace of Mind."
- Group dependencies into the categories of People, Inputs/Data, Technology, and Workspace to help you identify contingency gaps and risks such as a lack of backup personnel for key roles.



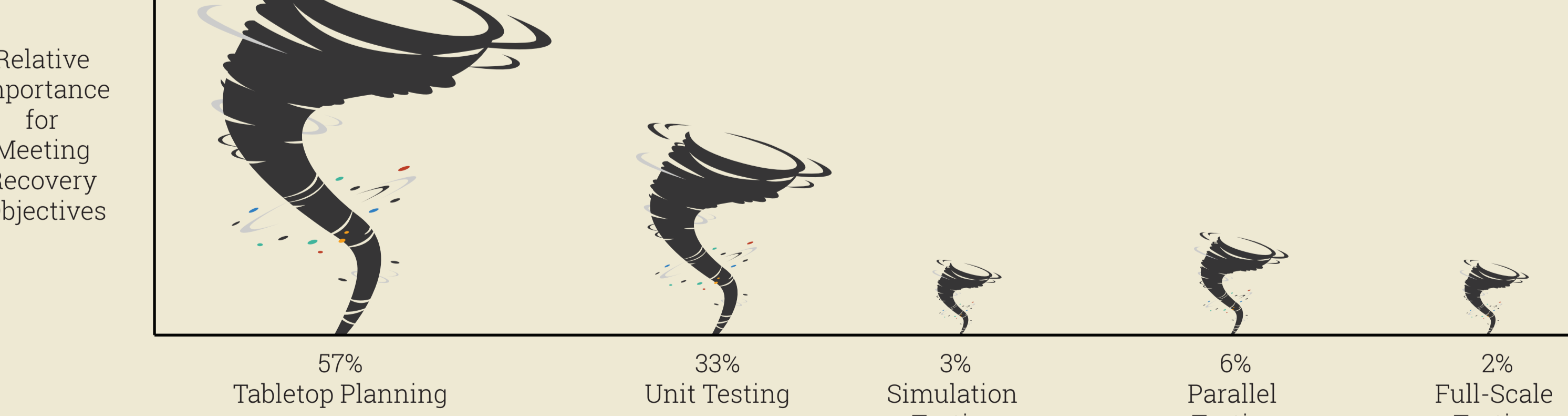
### 3 Determine the desired (target) recovery timeline

- Set recovery timeline targets based on the business tolerance for downtime and data loss, regardless of whether you can achieve those targets today. This is critical to the projects necessary to close those gaps.
- Validate recovery timeline targets with business leaders. Expect adjustments in those targets as the business balances the cost of preventing/minimizing downtime with the potential impact of downtime.

### 4 Determine the current achievable recovery timeline

Use tabletop planning to determine the organization's current incident response capability (and therefore the current achievable recovery timeline).

**Note:** Tabletop planning is also an effective means for ongoing testing of your BCP. An Info-Tech study found it was the most effective testing methodology for ensuring the organization can meet its recovery objectives.



#### Why is tabletop planning so effective?

- It enables you to play out a wider-range of scenarios than technology-based testing due to cost and complexity factors.
- It is non-intrusive, so it can be executed more frequently than other testing methodologies.
- It provides a thorough test of your incident response plan since the exercise is essentially paper-based.

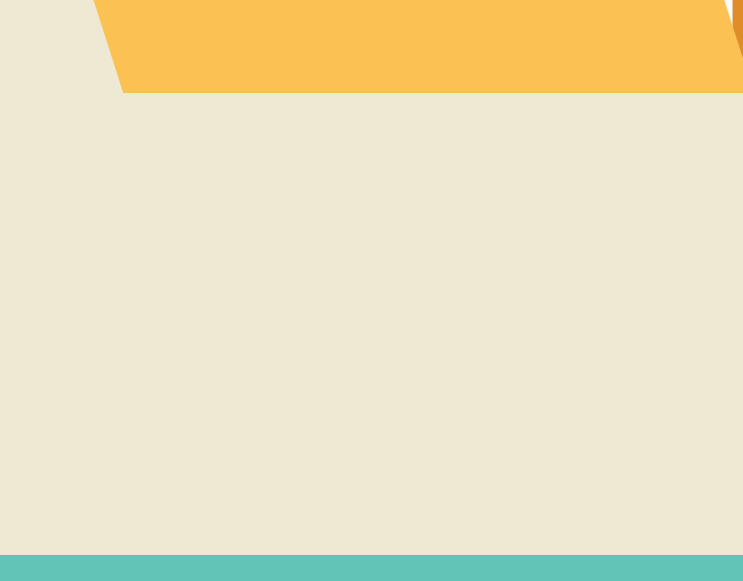
### 5 Identify and prioritize projects to close gaps and mitigate risks

Define a project roadmap that will achieve the desired recovery capability and business resiliency.

Be the turtle – improving business continuity capabilities is a long-distance run, not a sprint. Even if budget is not a concern, understand that change for the better is still change, and introduces risk; and massive changes introduce massive risk. Make incremental changes to minimize disruption.

### 6 Document and validate the desired-state incident response plan

- Before investing in the BC project roadmap, validate that it will achieve the desired recovery timeline by repeating the tabletop planning exercise for the desired state (i.e. based on your expected capabilities after the projects have been completed).
- Document the desired-state incident response plan based on the tabletop planning results to clarify your end goal. Also document the incident response plan for your current state so you have a plan you can follow while implementing disaster recovery improvements.



### 7 Create a plan to develop a BCP for remaining business units and initiate ongoing BCM

- Expect to find conflicting priorities and uncover new dependencies as you coordinate the BCP for remaining business units. Assign the same BCP Coordinator to each business unit to identify and resolve these issues as they come up.
- Incident response team leaders are not necessarily those with the most senior title on each BC/DR team. It's more important that the team leader has the appropriate skill set than the bigger title.

