



---

## **Incident Response Planning: The Recipe**

**By Mark Clarke, senior consultant, business continuity services, Sollievo**

Remember baking holiday cookies with Grandma? Or making last night's dinner? No matter what you're cooking, there's always a recipe. Sure, you may add things here and there or make adjustments, but the recipe gives you ingredients and steps in a precise order. It's a science after all.

The same is true of incident response planning. Part of creating an effective incident response plan is gathering all the information (the ingredients) and laying out the timeline of events (the steps).

First, you'll need to conduct a business impact analysis (BIA). This will help you identify how all of your operations interact and impact one another. It'll also identify the employees who will play key roles in carrying out your plan. In other words, a BIA will help you determine the "ingredients" you'll need.

Identify roles and responsibilities of your staff. Who will be the internal contact person? Who will act as liaison to the media? If the appointed staff person can't be reached, who is the backup?

Figure out how staff and external party notifications will be reached. Do you have a centralized system for notifications or is there some sort of calling tree in place? Can you give updates via multiple channels, such as email, text and phone calls?

Make adjustments for different kinds of incidents. These can include a natural disaster, fire, active shooter, bomb threat, cyber attack, burglary, etc.

Once you have these things figured out, you can start building the plan. Use a checklist to make sure you cover all of the important areas you will need to address with your incident response plan. What is the incident? When and where did it happen? Who is involved? Who should be notified? What is the anticipated duration of the incident?

---



---

Write out the steps of the plan from start to finish. When you're done, get management's approval and test, test, test to make sure the plan is feasible and reliable.

See, an incident response plan is a lot like a recipe. Okay, maybe it's not like baking cookies with Grandma. But as long as you know your resources and your plan of attack, you can protect your business from potential incidents.

For more information, visit [www.sollievo.com](http://www.sollievo.com) or contact a senior consultant at (855) 605-5664 or [seniorconsultant@sollievo.com](mailto:seniorconsultant@sollievo.com).

*About Mark Clarke*

Mark Clarke is senior consultant, business continuity services for Sollievo. Mr. Clarke's experience consists of directing, facilitating, and coordinating business continuity programs, and ensuring that the program is maintained and tested in consideration of business needs, and in compliance with internal policies, standards, and regulatory guidelines. Mr. Clarke is also experienced in conducting operational risk assessments.

