# Sample business impact analysis questionnaire

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*A* [*business impact analysis*](http://searchdisasterrecovery.techtarget.com/feature/Using-a-business-impact-analysis-BIA-template-A-free-BIA-template-and-guide) *(BIA) attempts to relate specific risks and threats to their impact on key issues like business operations, financial performance, reputation, employees and supply chains. The BIA is usually the starting point for risk identification in a business continuity context and the analysis’ results should guide the risk assessment process.*

*The discovery process relies on questionnaires to gather relevant information. The person creating the BIA works to identify business attributes such as critical business processes, interdependencies among business units (both internal and external), supply chain dependencies, minimum acceptable office configurations and supplies, minimum time needed to recover operations, as well as minimum staffing required to provide business as usual. BIA questions are posed to key members of each operating unit in the company. A well-organized BIA questionnaire should be able to fulfill its discovery objectives in no more than 20 to 25 questions.*

*The template below contains topics for suggested questions in your organization’s* [*business impact analysis questionnaire*](http://searchdisasterrecovery.techtarget.com/tutorial/Business-impact-analysis-questionnaire-template)*.*

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| **SAMPLE QUESTION/TOPIC** | **NOTES** |
| **Business processes** | *Describe**the business processes for your business unit; minimum acceptable recovery time frames for the business unit, and for specific processes (e.g., accounting), applications (e.g., email), etc.* |
| **Dependencies among business units/processes** | *Define the business units and/or processes and/or systems that a business unit/process depends on to perform normally; specify if these are internal or external to the organization, such as supply chains.* |
| **Criticality of business processes** | *To the greatest extent possible, determine which business units and/or processes are the most essential to the company and its operations.* |
| **Availability of alternate business processes, staffing and resources** | *Specify alternate procedures, e.g., paper work orders or paper order forms, that can be used in lieu of the principal process; access to temporary staffing; and access to alternate operating resources such as a hot disaster recovery site.* |
| **Work backlog** | *For each defined business unit and/or process identified, how long will it take (e.g., hours) to process daily backlogs for each day of downtime? What technique is used, e.g., concurrent or sequential processing?* |
| **Critical records** | *Specify critical business records by record name, type of media, primary location of records and alternate location (as required).*  |
| **Reporting requirements** | *What specific internal/external reporting, such as for regulatory requirements, is needed? Include the report name, author(s), recipient(s), frequency, delivery requirements, variances allowed and penalties (if any).* |
| **Difficulty of recovery** | *Define potential recovery issues in terms of difficulty to recover operations, time needed to recover and resources needed to recover.* |
| **Difficulty of restoration** | *Define potential restoration issues in terms of difficulty to restore operations to an as-normal or near-normal state.* |
| **Tolerance to outages** | *Assuming a serious situation, such as destruction of the company’s headquarters locatio****n,*** *how long (hours or days) could the business unit and/or system/application be unusable before its loss would impact the organization, its stakeholders, suppliers, regulators, etc.?* |
| **Maximum time for disruption to business functions/processes/systems** | *Determine the maximum amount of time, e.g., hours, days, weeks, months, that business units, functions, processes, systems, employees, office space, etc. can be unavailable before the firm loses business, market share, revenues, customers, etc.* |
| **Disruption impact by timeframe** | *Using an acceptable time frame, such as days, weeks or months, define the impact to the organization if an event occurs at certain times of the year, or certain days of the month.* |
| **Disruption impact by severity of incident** | *Specify the degree of severity of the identified outage or disruption, e.g., worst case = 5, no impact = 0.* |
| **Disruption impact by line of business** | *Specify the line of business (e.g., manufacturing, accounting) and the impact to that activity, e.g.,**worst case = 5, no impact = 0.* |
| **Disruption impact by operation** | *Define operational impacts, such as cash flow, competitive position, public image, reputation, staff morale, employee hiring and retention, financial reporting, stakeholder perceptions, shareholder perceptions, and the impact to that activity, e.g.,**worst case = 5, no impact = 0.* |
| **Financial impact** | *Determine the estimated impact to earnings, profits, expenses, etc., in a variety of time frames, such as days, weeks and months.* |
| **Minimum acceptable staffing** | *Specify the minimum number of people needed for each business unit to operate as-normal or near-normal.* |
| **Minimum acceptable configuration of systems** | *Specify minimum number of physical systems, such as servers, routers, switches, workstations, laptops, phones, copiers to resume limited operations.* |
| **Minimum acceptable applications**  | *Specify minimally necessary operating systems, databases, applications, utilities, etc. needed for employees and operations.* |
| **Minimum acceptable infrastructure requirements**  | *Specify such items as power, HVAC, voice and data communications, water supplies, food supplies.* |
| **Minimum acceptable space requirements** | *Specify minimum physical space required by employees, e.g., 40-50 square feet.* |
| **Minimum acceptable work space requirements** | *Specify such items as office supplies, furniture, lighting, phone/data connections, electrical outlets.* |
| **Define unique or specialized requirements** | *There may be a need for specialized systems, such as high-speed printers, plotters and graphics workstations; define the minimally acceptable number and type.* |
| **Anticipated changes to the business** | *Provide details on special situations, such as mergers and acquisitions and planned physical moves, the presence of which could affect how the organization recovers.* |
| **Other** | *Specify any other issues or concerns that may affect the recovery of a business unit, systems supporting that business unit, staffing, etc.*  |