



Certification Application Guidelines

Introduction

These Guidelines offer tips that are designed to help you succeed in your application for certification as a Business Continuity professional.

To certify an application, DRI CANADA:

1. Ensures that a newly received application meets basic criteria in areas such as exam results, payments, references and experience, and checks that the application has been signed
2. Creates reference packages using information provided in the Professional Practice areas, plus other questionnaires (Reference must not sign the Professional Practices sections of the application before you send it to DRI CANADA.)
3. Waits 90 days for references to return completed reference packages; monthly notices from us will suggest references who may need prompting
4. Sends a completed reference package to more than one member of the Certification Commission, for review
5. Forwards to you any reviewer requests for clarification or for more information; you will have 90 days to respond; a reviewer may only request additional information once
6. Informs you of the Certification Commission's decision by e-mail, mail or courier

The Certification Commission will reach one of three decisions: awarding the certification requested; awarding a lower certification, or denying certification.

Guidelines

This document is the absolute authority on matters to do with an application for certification. Please carefully read and act on the following points.

- Begin by visiting the DRI CANADA website (www.dri.ca) and downloading the most recent version of the application. An application's revision date is at the bottom of the cover page. Revisions earlier than 5/2004 will not be accepted.
- Signify your chosen certification level. Certification levels include Associate Business Continuity Professional (ABCP), Certified Functional Continuity Professional (CFCP), Certified Business Continuity Professional (CBCP) and Master Business Continuity Professional (MBCP)
- Type all information except signatures. Handwritten applications will not be accepted.
- Write all Related Experience information in the first person. Describe your contribution or role clearly and in detail.
- Describe your experience and role(s) with reference to the Professional Practices. They are the benchmarks against which Commissioners measure your contributions and grade your work.
- Have a copy of the Professional Practices beside you as you complete your application.
- For each Professional Practice area, remember to explain **what you did** and **how you did it**, alone or with others.
- Focus on your continuity planning responsibilities and accomplishments, not position or organization accomplishments.

- Emphasize disaster recovery and business continuity planning experiences, noting dates when the experiences took place. Managers or supervisors who can attest to your experiences make excellent references. Consultants can ask clients to be references.
- Do not refer Commissioners to your CV and do not include printouts of project plans or slide presentations.
- For all subject areas in your application, provide a separate page(s) for each project and company you describe and be sure that you clearly link references with their companies or projects. Providing a mailing address for a reference is insufficient.
- Your response in the section entitled "How My Work Experience Qualifies Me for Professional Certification" should be factual and concise. It should speak directly to your disaster recovery or business continuity planning experience and your commitment to the discipline. Avoid philosophical posturing. Do not submit more than a single, double-spaced page.
- Tell your references that they will be asked by DRI to verify your statements. When references are well informed, applications can be processed faster.
- Remember to sign the last page of the application. DRI must have your signature on file.
- Return a completed certification application and your application fee to one of:

Disaster Recovery Institute Canada
39 River Street
Toronto, ON M5A 3P1

Questions

If you have any questions, please contact DRI Canada at one of the addresses immediately above or call 416-646-1600 or 1-844-228-8135.

Example Submission for Subject Matter Area #1 (Project Initiation and Management)

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Professional Practice Area of Experience		Section C
1. PROJECT INITIATION AND MANAGEMENT		
Organization	Any Company Canada	
Title	Manager, Business Continuity Management	
Time In Role	April 2000 to October 2000 – 75% of my time	
<p>BACKGROUND:</p> <p>In the early part of 2000, senior management reviewed the then current business resumption process and determined that the focus should change from that of resumption to continuity.</p> <p>I was requested to spearhead the change and develop & implement a detailed process / program that reflected the broad discussions of members of the C level management team. My role prior to transition was that of manager for the business resumption program in a part time capacity. As a result of the transition, my position became full time manager for the business continuity management program.</p> <p>The Chief Operating Officer was named the executive sponsor of the new program.</p> <p>WHAT I DID:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I researched and documented the status of business resumption in the organization. ▪ I researched and documented the strengths and weaknesses of the business resumption program. ▪ I documented the new policy requirements, program direction and long term plans for a BCM program. ▪ I obtained senior management support and commitment for the new program. ▪ I analyzed existing resources and provided justification for additional program funding and human resources. ▪ I implemented and led working groups to establish the new program. ▪ I communicated throughout this process with senior executives, managers and employees. <p>HOW I DID IT:</p> <p>Establish the Need for Business Continuity:</p> <p>To assist in documenting the current state of the program, I conducted an in-depth review of all relevant files for the previous ten years. I then consulted with key personnel in our information technology sector to determine the status of our disaster recovery plans and the viability and functionality of our disaster recovery site. In addition to the status of disaster recovery, I was able to obtain a copy of a survey conducted for the Chief Information Officer some years previously. It contained dated but pertinent information on business continuity and disaster recovery at that time, which was similar to the results of my recent research within the IT sector. From this information, I was able to identify areas that should be revisited in order to establish the objectives of the overall program</p> <p>I then used that data to develop and conduct a high level survey across all business lines and branch offices in the provinces and territories. The feedback from this survey confirmed my previous research and emphasized the need for significant changes to the process and program, then in place. This included a requirement for additional full time staff; a substantial increase in funding and structured training for all those involved with the program. In addition, I identified several areas that were in need of an overhaul in both method and process.</p>		

Once I completed my research, I documented the findings in a business case, which included recommendations for an increase in resources and recommendations for dealing with the identified shortcomings. I included an outline on establishing the new program, the steps that would be required and responsibilities for those involved. The business case was forwarded to the Chief Operating Officer, who accepted my findings and approved all the recommendations. Once approved, the business case was presented to the C level management team who accepted and endorsed the business case.

Communicate the Need for a Business Continuity Plan:

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Involve Executive Management in the BCP Process:

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Establish a Planning / Steering Committee:

After careful consideration, I determined that a formal planning / steering committee was not required as follows:

- I was not establishing a new program, but revamping an existing one.
- Policy was in place.
- I had access to the various executive levels across the organization.
- Resource allocation came through my direct supervisor.
- The executive sponsor was accessible and strategically situated.
- The C level management team received regular briefings on program status.

I had considerable project management experience and believed that in this case, a formal process would prove cumbersome in the transition from business resumption to business continuity. In addition, I felt that my experience and knowledge, along with the guidance provided by various professional organization documentation and internal policy were sufficient to preclude the formal method.

I discussed my decision and the rationale for it, with my supervisor and suggested that an informal process would better serve the program, as it would prove to be much more effective and efficient. I suggested that an informal committee comprised of he, myself and the executive sponsor would suffice. The day to day tasks would be my responsibility and any unsolved problems could be reconciled during my regular briefings to him. If necessary, we could approach the executive sponsor for assistance or guidance. He accepted my proposal and it is gratifying to note that it worked and that there no problems for the period I was responsible for the program.

Develop Budget Requirements:

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Identify Planning Team(s) and Responsibilities:

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Develop and Coordinate Project Action Plans:

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Develop The Ongoing Project Management and Documentation Requirements for the BCP Process:

I was given wide authority and latitude in managing the development and implementation of the program, by my supervisor.

I invested considerable time and effort in researching the process to put in place the program which included contact with other professionals in both the private and public sector and extensive investigation on the Internet. It was very gratifying to note that my research conducted during the project initiation phase verified the direction and guidance provided in the documents I worked from.

To assist in managing my workload and to ensure proper documentation, I created the following projects:

- Business case
- Training package
- Communications process
- Software package
- C level management team updates
- Infrastructure continuity program
- Business Impact Analysis
- Intranet web site
- Disaster recovery site relocation

I utilized an in-house project management system to track the development and implementation of the program. The system was used to identify the work to be done, the tasks to be completed, the resources required to accomplish the work, the time frames for completion of work, updates on milestones and the funding required. My submissions included an overview of the research conducted, the rationale for the project and a description of the initiative.

I opened separate files for each project to ensure a complete and accurate record of all work, decisions and implementation activities were documented and updated on a continual basis.

Report to and Obtain Senior Management Approval / Commitment:

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This example is provided as a suggested format for documenting your experience. Using this method provides the information in a precise and easy to read format. It will assist the Certification Commissioners in reviewing your application, validating your experience and may eliminate the need for a Commissioner to ask for additional detail.

Review of your application is based on the Professional Practices in general and Part B – “The Professional Should Demonstrate a Working Knowledge of the Following Areas”, specifically. As such, the example lists all the Part B sub-headings and provides information in 3 of the 9, for illustrative purposes only. You should provide sufficient detail for all the sub-headings to ensure the Certification Commissioners have sufficient information to review and evaluate your experience.

Note: *A Certification Commissioner can ask for additional information only once. As a result, it is in your best interest to document as much experience as possible. Failure to respond accurately could result in denial of the application.*

SUBJECT AREA 1: PROJECT INITIATION AND MANAGEMENT

Establish the need for Business Continuity Planning (BCP) within a Business Continuity Management (BCM) Process, including resilience strategies, recovery objectives, business continuity and crisis management plans, and including obtaining management support, and organizing and managing the project to initiate the process to completion within agreed upon time and budget limits.

A. THE PROFESSIONALS ROLE IS TO:

1. Lead Sponsors in Defining Objectives, Policies, and Critical Success Factors

- a. Scope and objectives
- b. Legal and requirements reasons
- c. Case histories and industry best practices

2. Coordinate and Organize/Manage the BCP Project and Overall BCP Process using a steering committee and project task force

3. Oversee the BCP Process Through Effective Control Methods and Change Management

4. Present (Sell) the Process to Management and Staff

5. Develop Project Plan and Budget to initiate the process

6. Define and Recommend Process Structure and Management

7. Manage the Project to Develop and Implement the BCP Process

B. THE PROFESSIONAL SHOULD DEMONSTRATE A WORKING KNOWLEDGE IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

1. Establish the Need for Business Continuity

- a. Reference relevant legal/regulatory/statutory/contractual requirements and restrictions
- b. Reference relevant regulations of industry trade bodies or associations, where appropriate
- c. Reference current recommendations of relevant authorities
- d. Relate legislation, regulations, and recommendations to organizational policy
- e. Identify any conflicts between organizational policies and relevant external requirements
- f. Identify any audit records
- g. Propose methods, which may include a BCP or crisis management plan, to resolve any conflicts between organizational policies and relevant external requirements
- h. Identify business practices (e.g., just-in-time inventory) that may adversely impact the organization's ability to recover following a disaster event

2. Communicate the Need for a Business Continuity Plan

- a. Develop awareness by means of formal reports and presentations
- b. State the benefits of the BCP and relate the benefits to organizational mission, objectives, and operations
- c. Gain organizational commitment to the BCP process
- d. Develop a mission statement/charter for the BCP process

3. Involve Executive Management in the BCP Process

- a. Explain executive management's role in the BCP process
- b. Explain and communicate management's accountability and liability for the BCP process

4. Establish a Planning/Steering Committee: Roles and Responsibilities, Types of Organization, Control and Development, and Membership

- a. Select appropriate personnel
- b. Define their roles and responsibilities
- c. Develop a suitable set of objectives for the BCP process

5. Develop Budget Requirements

- a. Clearly define resource requirements
- b. Obtain estimates of financial requirement
- c. Verify the validity of resources requirements
- d. Validate the estimates of financial requirements
- e. Negotiate resource and financial requirements with management
- f. Obtain executive commitment for financial requirements

6. Identify Planning Team(s) and Responsibilities

- a. Emergency management/incident response/crisis management team
- b. Business continuity planning teams (multi-location, multi-divisions, etc.)
- c. Recovery/response and restoration teams

7. Develop and Coordinate Project Action Plans to Develop and Implement the BCP Process

- a. Develop an overall project plan with realistic time estimates and schedule

8. Develop the Ongoing Management and Documentation Requirements for the BCP Process

9. Report to Senior Management and Obtain Senior Management Approval/Commitment

- a. Set up a schedule to report the progress of the BCP process to senior managers
- b. Develop regular status reports for senior management that contain concise, pertinent, accurate, and timely information on key parameters of interest or information of which senior management should be made aware