

**Action Item.** An action item is something that could be done now or in the future to make our organization more prepared to continue its operations after an event or disaster. Action items can be big or small, costly or costless, within the scope of your department to perform, or outside your scope. Taken together, a department's action items comprise a **to-do list for readiness**.

The typical Action Item begins with a verb and can be stated in one sentence. Some examples:

- Do seismic bracing in all department laboratories.
- Develop a plan for redeploying nursing staff to critical areas.
- Cross-train two staff members to handle payroll & purchasing.
- Make an emergency contact list and ask all staff to keep a copy at home.

**Centrally-Owned Application.** This term loosely applies to applications that are campus applications, supported to the campus or available campus wide. (e.g. Banner, iBuy, McKesson HealthQuest Medipac)

**Clustered Departments.** Departments that share administrative staff.

**Continuity Plan.** Continuity planning addresses the question: how can we prepare to continue operations despite adverse events without the usual resources or resume critical operations

**Cost Center.** An accounting term denoting a department that incurs costs but does not directly produce revenue. In some organizations, this term is loosely used to divide up the organization for the purposes of allocating budget (e.g. CFOPAL).

**Critical Function.** A Critical Function is an activity that is essential to the core mission of the organization. For disaster planning, a Critical Function is one that must be continued through disaster, or resumed soon after a disaster-event, to ensure either the viability of the organization, or its ability to serve its customers.

**Downstream Dependency.** A downstream dependency is a department that depends on your department. If your department fails to perform, the ability of the downstream department to carry out its mission will be seriously impaired.

**Functional Owner.** The functional owner of an IT application is the unit that governs the design (and often the use) of the application.

**Offsite Storage.** Offsite storage refers to the storage of tapes, disks, paper documents and other materials at a location far enough from an organization's operating location that a disaster-event at one location is not likely to impact the other location.

**Onsite Storage.** Onsite storage refers to the storage of tapes, disks, paper documents and other materials at an organization's operating location, rather than elsewhere. Onsite storage of backups is adequate for protection against some types of disasters and is less expensive and more-quickly-accessed than offsite storage. For more valuable and less-replaceable items, offsite storage becomes desirable.

**Peak Periods.** These are months when you would expect there to be especially high activity involved in accomplishing a Critical Function. This might be a peak workload period such as the annual fiscal closing for accounting functions or it might denote activities that happen only at certain times - such as course-registration that happens once per semester.

**Sponsor.** Sponsor refers to an agency or organization that provides grant funding for research projects.

**Technical Owner.** The technical owner of an IT application is the unit that has top-level administrator and programming access, implements any modifications, and troubleshoots and fixes any technical problems.

**Upstream Dependency.** An upstream dependency is a department that **your** department depends on. If the upstream department fails to perform, the ability of your department to carry out its mission will be seriously impaired.

**Virtual Private Network (VPN).** VPN is a technology that enables a user to establish a secure connection with a remote network. For example, a VPN connection allows a user at home to connect to the campus network, access files and applications, and work from home. An advantage of the VPN connection is that one's office computer need not be running. A disadvantage of the VPN connection is that files stored on the user's office computer (i.e., on the office computer's local hard drive) will not be accessible; and client-server applications will function only if the user has pre-installed the "client" software on her home computer. As a strategy to enable working-from-home (or from any remote location) during times of crisis, a VPN connection is considered superior to a Windows Remote Desktop connection.

**Windows Remote Desktop.** Windows Remote Desktop is a technology that enables Windows computer users to log into and operate their computer, via the internet, from a remote location. It is commonly used by employees to operate their office computers either from home sitting at their home computer, or from any other location sitting at a laptop or desktop machine. A limitation of the windows remote desktop technology (for disaster recovery) is that the office computer must be powered and running.