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Conference or Workshop Item

Title: Business continuity: observations for a Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership seminar

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Version: Presented version

http://nectar.northampton.ac.uk/7544/
Decision-making = competitive advantage
Agenda

• **Background | Key Observations**
  – Suggestions to enhance BC / other planning

• **Introducing the Cortex Group**
  – Informal network facilitated by Northampton Business School
  – World-class practitioners: unique insights, applied management of extreme risks
  – Guy Batchelor: Minerva Elite
  – Paul McFarlane & Raj Mahajan: Metropolitan Police
1\textsuperscript{st} Anthropologist in UK govt.

- **1998 | Defence Research**
  - Information Warfare: Protect/target decision-makers
  - Hd. Strategic National Capability

- **2001 Cabinet Office - 2010 Consultancy**
  - Strategic attack, business continuity, crisis mgt
  - Commissioned by boards: c-suite & operational
  - Unique tools & techniques to build resilience
  - Ruthless attention to strategic objectives & delivery

- **2010 | education, research, consultancy**
Focus on Consequences Not Causes
Manage the Crisis AND the Business
Expect the Fog
TRAIN HARD, FIGHT EASY
Can you (under stress) ...

- Make sense of the situation?
- Deliver strategic objectives?
- Generate options?
- Execute & track decisions?

... under imperfect conditions, with incomplete information
Sustain the Response
[including the tail(s)]
Five Fundamental Processes Needed

- **Information-Gathering**
  Acquisition & processing of information

- **Assessment of the Situation**
  Development of a comprehensive analysis

- **Decision-Making**
  Timely, proportionate and sustainable decisions

- **Action & Monitoring**
  Execution & tracking of decisions and their effects

- **Communication**
  Key information to internal & external stakeholders
In Summary

- Plans need to be actionable resources
  - Usually massive, contradictory & useless documents
- Many crises caused by latent (knowable) risks
  - Active discovery & resolution critical: culture key
- Managing a crisis = decision-making
  - Most organisations very poor under normal conditions
- Crises characterised by
  - Imperfect conditions (key folk on holiday ...)
  - Incomplete, inconsistent information
  - Shock & surprise, reality always different to rehearsal
  - Stress, emotion, confusion, overload
- Reliable capability needs rehearsal: build reflexes
- Confidence & competence has wider benefits
  - Creativity, awareness of consequences, agility
  - Leaner suite of plans + human capability
Towards Competitive Advantage

• Unique perspectives on the challenges
• Crisis, continuity & resilience planning and response
  – The Special Forces mindset + BS 65000 => mitigating risk and performing under pressure
  – Metropolitan Police: uncovering key risks ahead of crisis