

**Disasters: Business Continuity Planning**  
**AP/DEMS 3703**  
**York University, School of Administrative Studies**  
**COURSE OUTLINE – Winter 2023**

**Instructor Contact Information**

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**Course Description**

Business continuity is the process through which organizations create the resilience required to respond to and recover from disaster. This course introduces the fundamental theories and methods of business continuity, empowering students to create preparedness at an organization they care about.

The course will be delivered through online lectures and assignments. There is no final exam.

**Course Philosophy**

As a student in this course, you will take on the role of a scholar/practitioner, and, through practice, become a business continuity planner. In this, you will identify a client at a small organization who needs a business continuity plan and then engage with them to develop a business impact analysis, risk assessment, and ultimately, a workable solution to create resilience.

As a scholar, you will come to understand the state-of-the-art in business continuity planning. As a practitioner, you will be expected to create tangible value for your client.

Critically, the process of creating resilience is a creative one. There are not necessarily any “right” answers. What is best for your client will depend on their unique characteristics. As a scholar/practitioner, it is your job to justify your decisions. If you can make a robust and well-articulated argument using the literature and your conversations with your client, then you will be graded appropriately high. Conversely, if you submit poorly written work, lack citations from the literature, or fail to incorporate your client's needs, you will be graded appropriately low.

In working through assignments and engaging with your client, the quality of your writing is expected to be impeccable. Because poor writing can undermine an entire argument and diminish the perceived quality of your work, it is essential to write well. You should be using tools like Grammarly to help work through the editing process. While some errors are bound to make it past any editor, there should not be repeated or egregious mistakes. Frequent and severe mistakes will have a significant effect on your grade.

**COVID-19 Disclaimer**

In working through this course, you will be asked to meet with people. Please do so in a way that accommodates COVID-19. Get vaccinated and get tested if you have any symptoms.

## Course Objectives

1. Students will learn about the field of business continuity and the associated practices used to develop, implement, and maintain a business continuity program.
2. Students will learn key concepts and methodologies associated with business continuity.
3. Students will gain critical experience as business continuity planners by working through methodologies to create resilience and deliver a business continuity management program.

## Course Format

The Winter 2023 session of DEMS 3703 will be taught virtually. All course materials will be shared online through the eClass course page.

## Course Materials

Engemann, & Henderson, D. M. (2012). Business continuity and risk management: essentials of organizational resilience. Rothstein Associates Inc.

Available in digital format from Amazon from \$68.79 at [https://www.amazon.ca/Business-Continuity-Risk-Management-Organizational-ebook/dp/B00RNHEG8U/ref=tmm\\_kin\\_swatch\\_0?\\_encoding=UTF8&qid=1641612331&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.ca/Business-Continuity-Risk-Management-Organizational-ebook/dp/B00RNHEG8U/ref=tmm_kin_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1641612331&sr=8-1).

## Course Schedule

| Week of    | Topic                          | Reading   | Assignment     |
|------------|--------------------------------|---|----------------|
| January 12 | Introduction                   | Engemann & Henderson Chapters 1-2<br><br>Engemann & Henderson Chapter 3<br><br>Herbane, B. (2010). The evolution of business continuity management: A historical review of practices and drivers. <i>Business History</i> 52(6), 978-1002.  | Class Activity |
| January 19 | Program and Project Management | Botha, J. & Von Solms, R. (2004). A cyclic approach to business continuity planning. <i>Information Management and Computer Security</i> 12(4).<br><br>Hermanowicz, J. C. (2002). The great interview: 25 strategies for studying people in bed. <i>Qualitative Sociology</i> , 25(4), 479-499. | Class Activity |
| January 26 | Data Management                | Engemann & Henderson Chapters 14 & 15   | Class Activity |

|             |                                      |  |   |
|-------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|
|             |                                      | <p>Tversky, A., &amp; Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases: Biases in judgments reveal some heuristics of thinking under uncertainty. <i>Science</i>, 185(4157), 1124-1131.</p> <p>Ted-Ed: How statistics can be misleading</p> <p>The Big Think: Data makes you smart, but it doesn't make you wise.</p>        |   |
| February 2  | Business Impact Analysis             | <p>Engemann &amp; Henderson Chapter 3* Note this was also read in week one.</p> <p>Watkins, R. E., Cooke, F. C., Donovan, R. J., MacIntyre, C. R., Itzwerth, R., &amp; Plant, A. J. (2008). Tackle the problem when it gets here: pandemic preparedness among small and medium businesses. <i>Qualitative Health Research</i>, 18(7), 902-912.</p> | <p><b>Interview Assignment by 23:59 on February 2</b></p> <p>Class Activity</p>             |
| February 9  | Risk Management                      | Kaplan, R., & Mikes, A. (2012). Managing risks: a new framework. <i>Harvard business review</i> .  | Class Activity  |
| February 16 | Risk Assessment                      | Engemann & Henderson Chapter 4 and 5   | Class Activity  |
| February 23 | Reading Week                         | Reading Week   | Reading Week  |
| March 2     | Organizational Resilience            | <p>Suarez, F. F., &amp; Montes, J. S. (2020). Building Organizational Resilience. <i>Harvard Business Review</i>, 98(6), 47-52.</p> <p>Kendra, J. M., Clay, L. A., &amp; Gill, K. B. (2018). Resilience and disasters. In <i>Handbook of Disaster Research</i>. Springer, Cham.</p>  | <p><b>Business Impact Analysis Assignment by 23:59 on March 2</b></p> <p>Class Activity</p> |
| March 9     | Organizational Responses to Disaster | McKnight, B., & Linnenluecke, M. K. (2016). How firm responses to natural disasters strengthen community resilience: A stakeholder-based perspective. <i>Organization &amp; Environment</i> , 29(3), 290-307.  | Class Activity  |
| March 16    | Crisis Management                    | Boin, A. & Kuipers, S. (2018). The crisis approach. In <i>Handbook of Disaster Research</i> . Springer, Cham.  | Class Activity  |

|          |                           |   |  |
|----------|---------------------------|---|--|
| March 23 | Crisis Management         | <p>Stern, E. 2013. Preparing: The Sixth Task of Crisis Leadership. <i>Journal of Leadership Studies</i> 7: 51–56.</p> <p>Stern, E.K. 2009. Crisis Navigation: Lessons from History for the Crisis Manager in Chief. <i>Governance</i> 22: 189–202.</p>  | <p><b>Risk Assessment Assignment by 23:59 on March 23</b></p> <p>Class Activity</p>  |
| March 30 | Business Continuity Plans | <p>Engemann &amp; Henderson Chapter 10</p> <p>Chapter 1 of Clarke, L. (1999). <i>Mission improbable: Using fantasy documents to tame disaster</i>. University of Chicago Press.</p>   | Class Activity   |
| April 6  | IT Disaster Recovery      | <p>Engemann &amp; Henderson Chapter 6 &amp; 7</p> <p>Tierney, K. J. (2007). Businesses and disasters: Vulnerability, impacts, and recovery. In H. Rodriguez, E. L. Quarantelli, &amp; R. R. Dynes (Eds). <i>Handbook of Disaster Research</i>. Springer.</p> <p>HBR Podcast: Why cybersecurity isn't only a tech problem.</p> | <p><b>Business Continuity Assignment by 23:59 on April 6</b></p> <p><b>Annotated Bibliography Assignment by 23:59 on April 6</b></p> <p>Class Activity</p> |

### Course Assignments

| Due Date   | Assignment               | Value |
|------------|--------------------------|-------|
| Weekly     | Class Participation      | 10%   |
| February 2 | Interviews               | 25%   |
| March 2    | Business Impact Analysis | 15%   |
| March 23   | Risk Assessment          | 15%   |
| April 6    | Business Continuity Plan | 15%   |
| April 6    | Annotated Bibliography   | 20%   |

Late submission policy: Assignments are due on the date specified. Assignments turned in late are subject to a penalty of 10% per day. However, life happens. If there is a legitimate reason that you cannot submit an assignment on time, please email me at [zcox@yorku.ca](mailto:zcox@yorku.ca), and we may be able to make alternative arrangements. Note that extensions are not guaranteed, and supplying the greatest amount of notice possible will increase your chances of getting an extension.

## **Interviews – 25% of Final Grade, due February 2**

The process of business continuity and creating resilience requires practitioners to meet with their clients. It is impossible to understand the risks facing an organization or the impact of an outage without speaking to those who will be affected.

Thus, you will meet with three members of a small organization that you identify as needing a business continuity plan and will record your conversation. This organization could be a place where you work, volunteer, or enjoy visiting. You will complete three interviews with representatives from the ownership or management of the selected organization. Each interview should seek to understand the risks that the organization faces, how a disaster would impact them, and provide insight into how to construct a business continuity plan. These interviews will serve as the foundation for all subsequent assignments. Ensure that interviews are with people capable of providing you with the information you need.

The interview guide can be open-ended. Take a look at the assigned readings, Business Impact Analysis assignment, Risk Assessment assignment, and Business Continuity Plan assignment for a sense of what to ask. Interviews should be about an hour long, but there is no prescribed time limit. Generally, you'll want to know:

1. What kind of business do they run?
2. What is their vision for the business?
3. What are their deliverables?
4. What are their resources?
5. What risks do they face from the natural environment?
6. What risks do they face from the built environment?
7. How do they think a disaster would affect them?
8. How do they think they would recover from a disaster?
9. What are they doing to prepare?

Be sure to stay engaged during your interviews. Probe for additional detail. Refer to Hermanowicz (2002) for techniques to get the most out of your time with a participant and leave them feeling good. Remember, “a good interview should feel like a good date,” and a significant portion of your grade in this class depends on the quality of your conversation with your participant. If you're getting short answers, try asking your questions a little bit differently or probing for more detail. If you want to take your interviewing skills to the next level, practice with a friend, colleague, or family member before scheduling an interview and ask for feedback on your technique.

Once each interview is complete, either manually transcribe it or use an automated service. Zoom has a free feature to transcribe interviews automatically, and Otter.ai does an excellent job for \$12 per month.

Once all three of the interviews are complete, write a well-written 750-word analysis that synthesizes the key themes of the interviews. For example, what did your participants say that resonated with you? Do you think they adequately understood the risks they face? Did one person say something different from the other? Why? Quote your participants directly to support your claims.

Submit a Word document that begins with the well-written 750-word analysis (not including quotes) and includes all three interview transcripts.

**Important:** This assignment will take time. Finding participants, scheduling interviews, and writing the analysis will be difficult. Start immediately.

Students will be graded according to the following rubric.

| Component                 | Value                       |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Quality of each interview | 40% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of analysis       | 40% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of writing        | 20% of the assignment grade |

### **Business Impact Analysis – 15% of Final Grade, due March 2**

Using the information learned from interviews, the organization’s website, and other applicable sources, produce a business impact assessment for your client. A business impact analysis is used to determine and evaluate the potential effects that an interruption might have on critical business operations. As an essential component of a business continuity plan, an impact analysis includes an exploration of vulnerabilities and starts the scholar/practitioner and their client on a pathway to develop strategies for minimizing risk.

In a well-written report of 750 words, note all the activities and processes that are essential to the function of your client’s organization. Then, for each function, establish a recovery time objective and recovery point objective (if applicable). As well, describe all the dependencies that each activity or process relies on, and determine a recovery time objective and recovery point objective for them. As you write, cite the literature, and quote your participants where it is appropriate to make a powerful argument.

Structure your report according to the following outline:

1. Introduce your business impact analysis
2. Describe the scope of your business impact analysis
3. Persuasively justify the need for a business impact analysis specifically and a business continuity plan generally for your organization.
4. Describe the methodology and data collection procedures you followed to develop your business impact analysis

5. Describe each activity and process (and their dependents), including a recovery time objective and recovery point objective for each.
6. Write a powerful conclusion that ties together each component and leaves the reader with a clear understanding of the message you want to send.

| Component                               | Value                       |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Comprehension of business processes     | 30% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of writing                      | 30% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of references to the literature | 20% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of references to interviews     | 20% of the assignment grade |

### **Risk Assessment – 15% of Final Grade, due March 23**

Using the information learned from interviews, the organization’s website, the York University library, and other applicable sources produce a risk assessment for your client. A risk assessment identifies the risks an organization faces and allows you to understand the degree to which your client is exposed to potential losses resulting from a hazard.

In a well-written paper of 750 words, describe and analyze all the hazards and operational risks your client faces. Then, synthesize this data into a meaningful product that clearly shows your client what they should be worried about.

Structure your report according to the following outline:

1. Introduce your risk assessment
2. Describe the scope of your risk assessment
3. Persuasively justify the need for a risk assessment specifically and a business continuity plan generally for your organization (part of this should iterate on what you wrote in the business impact analysis assignment).
4. Describe the methodology and data collection procedures you followed to develop your risk assessment
5. Produce a risk registrar that is complete, well-organized, and easy to follow, listing all of the identified hazards and risks that your organization faces. Include data from class readings, your interviews, and elsewhere. Hint: librarians at the York University library can connect you with maps and other resources that will help make this assignment far more comprehensive.

| Component                               | Value                       |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Completeness of risk registrar          | 30% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of writing                      | 30% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of references to the literature | 20% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of references to interviews     | 20% of the assignment grade |

### **Business Continuity Plan – 15% of Final Grade, due April 6**

Using the information learned from interviews, the organization’s website, and other applicable sources, produce a business continuity plan for your client. A business continuity plan contains the continuity and recovery procedures that your client can deploy to resume operations following an incident. It is their blueprint for response.

In a well-written paper of 750 words, produce a document containing continuity and recovery procedures, outlining the strategies your client can use to resume operations.

Structure your plan according to the following outline:

1. Introduce your business continuity plan
2. Persuasively justify the need for a business continuity plan at your client’s organization
3. Set the scope and objectives of a recovery
4. Describe the situations in which your client would put this business continuity plan to use
5. Detail who is on the incident management team and its operational structure
6. Describe the roles and responsibilities of members of the incident management team
7. Your recommendations for how to implement and maintain the business continuity plan
8. Conclude and summarize.

You should complete this assignment using information from the literature, your interviews, the business impact analysis assignment, and the risk assessment assignment. Be sure to cite all materials you reference.

| <b>Component</b>                        | <b>Value</b>                |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Quality of business continuity plan     | 30% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of writing                      | 30% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of references to the literature | 20% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of references to interviews     | 20% of the assignment grade |

Once complete, schedule a meeting with your client to review the business continuity plan you have produced. Having participated in an interview, they are certainly interested in your work. Moreover, this is an opportunity to truly create resilience. As a scholar/practitioner, you are an expert at business continuity. Your knowledge has tremendous power and is of immense value. Indeed, business continuity plans are often worth thousands of dollars and are inaccessible to most. Use your skills to ensure that the places you care about most can withstand the next disaster.

### **Annotated Bibliography – 20% of Final Grade, due April 6**

It is challenging to synthesize and understand the significant amount of reading required for this class. To help keep track of the readings and help cite the other assignments, complete an annotated bibliography.



For each citation read in class, identify the main topic of study or research question, methods employed (if applicable), key findings, and the author's conclusion. Each annotation should be about 300 words long, in addition to the citation. **DO NOT directly quote any part of the article.** Instead, express your observations in your own words, based on your understanding of the article.

You may use any citation style that you are comfortable with, but be sure to use it consistently. Sort all your annotations alphabetically.

| Component                               | Value                       |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Citation and annotation of all readings | 70% of the assignment grade |
| Quality of writing in each annotation   | 30% of the assignment grade |

## Deferred Exams

Deferred standing may be granted to students who are unable to write their final examination at the scheduled time or to submit their outstanding course work on the last day of classes. Details can be found at <http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/deferred-standing>

Any request for deferred standing on medical grounds must include an Attending Physician's Statement form; a "Doctor's Note" will not be accepted.

DSA Form: [http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/deferred\\_standing\\_agreement.pdf](http://www.registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/deferred_standing_agreement.pdf)

Attending Physician's Statement form: <http://registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf>

In order to apply for deferred standing, students must register at:

<http://apps.eso.yorku.ca/apps/adms/deferredexams.nsf>

Followed by handing in a completed DSA form and supporting documentation directly to the main office of the School of Administrative Studies (282 Atkinson) and add your ticket number to the DSA form. The DSA and supporting documentation must be submitted no later than five (5) business days from the date of the exam. These requests will be considered on their merit and decisions will be made available by logging into the above-mentioned link. No individualized communication will be sent by the School to the students (no letter or emails).

**Students with approved DSA will be able to write their deferred examination during the School's deferred examination period. No further extensions of deferred exams shall be granted. The format and covered content of the deferred examination may be different from that of the originally scheduled examination. The deferred exam may be closed book, cumulative and comprehensive and may include all subjects/topics of the textbook whether they have been covered in class or not. Any request for deferred standing on medical grounds must include an Attending Physician's Statement form; a "Doctor's Note" will not be accepted.**

## Academic Honesty

The Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies considers breaches of the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty to be serious matters. The Senate Policy on Academic Honesty is an affirmation and clarification for members of the University of the general obligation to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. As a clear sense of academic honesty and responsibility is fundamental to good scholarship, the policy recognizes the general responsibility of all faculty members to foster acceptable standards of academic conduct and of the student to be mindful of and abide by such standards. Suspected breaches of academic honesty will be investigated and charges shall be laid if reasonable and probable grounds exist.

Students should review the York Academic Honesty policy for themselves at:  
<http://www.yorku.ca/secretariat/policies/document.php?document=69>

Students might also wish to review the interactive online Tutorial for students on academic integrity, at: <https://spark.library.yorku.ca/academic-integrity-what-is-academic-integrity/>

### **Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy**

The grading scheme (i.e. kinds and weights of assignments, essays, exams, etc.) shall be announced, and be available in writing, within the first two weeks of class, and, under normal circumstances, graded feedback worth at least 15% of the final grade for Fall, Winter or Summer Term, and 30% for 'full year' courses offered in the Fall/Winter Term be received by students in all courses prior to the final withdrawal date from a course without receiving a grade.

Note: Under unusual and/or unforeseeable circumstances which disrupt the academic norm, instructors are expected to provide grading schemes and academic feedback in the spirit of these regulations, as soon as possible. For more information on the Grading Scheme and Feedback Policy, please visit: <http://www.yorku.ca/univsec/policies/document.php?document=86>

### **In-Class Tests and Exams - the 20% Rule**

For all Undergraduate courses, except those which regularly meet on Friday evening or on a weekend, tests or exams worth more than 20% will not be held in the two weeks prior to the beginning of the official examination period. For further information on the 20% Rule, please visit: <http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/limits-on-the-worth-of-examinations-in-the-final-classes-of-a-term-policy/>

### **Reappraisals**

Students may, with sufficient academic grounds, request that a final grade in a course be reappraised (which may mean the review of specific pieces of tangible work). Non-academic grounds are not relevant for grade reappraisals; in such cases, students are advised to petition to their home Faculty. Students are normally expected to first contact the course director to discuss the grade received and to request that their tangible work be reviewed. Tangible work may include written, graphic, digitized, modeled, video recording or audio recording formats, but not oral work. Students need to be aware that a request for a grade reappraisal may result in the original grade being raised, lowered or confirmed. For reappraisal procedures and information, please visit the Office of the Registrar site at: <http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/grade-reappraisal-policy>

### **Accommodation Procedures**

LA&PS students who have experienced a misfortune or who are too ill to attend the final examination in an ADMS course should not attempt to do so; they must pursue deferred standing. Other students should contact their home Faculty for information. For further information, please visit: <http://ds.info.yorku.ca/academic-support-accomodations/>

### **Religious Accommodation**

York University is committed to respecting the religious beliefs and practices of all members of the community, and making accommodations for observances of special significance to adherents. For more information on religious accommodation, please visit:

<https://w2prod.sis.yorku.ca/Apps/WebObjects/cdm.woa/wa/regobs>

### **Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Senate Policy)**

The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses. Provided that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder. For more information, please visit the Counselling and Disability Services website at

<http://www.yorku.ca/dshub/>

York's disabilities offices and the Registrar's Office work in partnership to support alternate exam and test accommodation services for students with disabilities at the Keele campus. For more information on alternate exams and tests please visit <http://www.yorku.ca/altexams/>

Please alert the Course Director as soon as possible should you require special accommodations.

Hello team,

I've completed marking the interview assignments turned in on February 4. Generally, everyone did a fairly good job, though there were some repeated issues that I noticed and wanted to address to the group.

Importantly: if you earned a lower than expected score on this assignment, it does not make you a bad person or unintelligent. All it means is that you missed the mark on this specific task. There are many more ways to make up your grade in this class, and we can work together to overcome any issues. If you would like to discuss your grade, send me an email and we can meet on Zoom to discuss.

### **Interviews**

Students generally lost points from the interview section for several reasons: fewer than three interviews, interviews with large organizations, or incomplete interviews.

#### **Fewer than three interviews (-4 points per missing interview)**

Several students did not complete the required three interviews with a single organization. Because the next assignments scaffold off of this one, the data that your participants gave you is essential. Without it, you will be unable to do the work required in this class. If you did not complete three interviews, reach back out to your organization and collect more data.

#### **Interviews with large organizations (-2 points)**

A few students worked with large organizations, but treated them like small organizations. As our readings noted, there are significant differences between large and small organizations, especially in how complex they are (Botha and Von Solms, 2004) which means that large organizations need to be given special treatment. Instead of working to understand the entirety of a simpler organization, students who worked with large organizations had the much harder job of identifying a specific team or department. Then, they should have come to understand the goals, deliverables, and resources of that specific team. As well, they should have explored the existing levels of preparedness, and worked to patch existing vulnerabilities and create novel resilience. Indeed, it is much more work to partner with a large organization because of their added complexity. If you have chosen a large organization, be sure to treat it as such in future assignments.

Note: if you worked with a large organization and treated it as a large organization, no points were deducted.

#### **Incomplete interviews (-2 points to -4 points)**

Hermanowicz (2002) suggested that a great interview should feel like a great date. It should appear conversational, with the interviewer seeking to understand the entirety of a participant's world, probing to flesh out detail. Reviewing the transcripts, I noticed a number of instances where participants would drop 'bread crumbs', hints at insights, that were never followed up on. Other times, interviewers seemed unprepared or uncomfortable in the interview, and would want to end it as fast as possible, glean little data and not offering their participants the respect that their time deserved. In cases where the interviews were incomplete, I would suggest returning to participants and asking them for further detail to complete the remaining assignments.

## Analysis

Students earned lower marks in the analysis portion of the assignment if they failed to cite sources or lacked depth in their analysis.

### **No citations (-2 points)**

Academic writing leverages the existing body of knowledge on a topic, and then extends it in novel ways based on empirical data. As scholar/practitioners of business continuity, it is imperative that students understand the literature and apply it to the data they've gathered. Unfortunately, there were fewer citations than expected in the analysis portion of this assignment. Because this is an academic course at a post-secondary institution, future assignments are expected to be well cited.

For example, it is not enough to simply describe the risk analysis of a participant and call it inadequate. A proper argument also needs to explain why it is inadequate. It needs to bring in Mark Liddell (2016), Timothy Snyder (2018), and Engemann and Henderson (2012) chapters 14 and 15, plus resources from outside this class, to have a complete and comprehensive model of what risk analysis even is.

Future assignments will deduct additional points if they lack citations.

### **No depth (-1 point)**

Perhaps because there were a lack of citations, there was not always a lot of depth to the analysis. In some cases, it felt like the analysis was stretching to reach 750 words, because the author didn't know what to say. This is common if an author is unfamiliar with the theory surrounding their analysis. Conversely, the best analysis were structured along the guidelines given by Engemann and Henderson (2012) chapter three, because they lay out a fantastic pathway for starting an analysis. All an author had to do was follow their template and fill in the gaps with the data they had gathered. Indeed, not only is this a more rigorous approach, it is also easier.

## Writing

The quality of writing was generally high in this assignment. Going forward, I would challenge everyone to edit their work for small errors, and try to write in a more engaging manner. After all, this class is about creating a powerful business continuity plan that can protect a place of importance from disaster. It's okay to write it in an engaging, energetic way. Be sure that you always follow proper essay conventions, including an introduction, body, and conclusion.

### **Errors (-1 point)**

There were fewer errors in these submissions than expected, well done. Of those that did exist, they could have been caught by an editor. Using a tool like Grammarly, or a buddy in this class is a great way to ensure that you're submitting your highest quality work.

### **Unengaging writing (-1 point)**

Many submissions had stylistic issues which made them difficult to read. While academic writing needs to cite its sources, it can be engaging. After all, this is an organization that serves a community need and you have identified as being worthy of protection. Feel free to get excited! Make your writing compelling and engaging. Think about how authors in *The Atlantic*, *The Economist*, or *The*

Wall Street Journal write. While they're not academics, they are engaging. Challenge yourself to emulate their style, while adding academic rigour to it.

**Inappropriate structure (-1 point)**

When writing anything, be sure to introduce your topic, flesh it out in the body, and include a conclusion. Basically, "tell your reader what you're going to tell them, actually tell them, and then tell them what you told them." Start your writing off with a quick introduction to prime your readers for what they're going to see, then show them the evidence, then drive home the critical points.