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Be Prepared.

(EMERGENCY PLANNING GUIDE FOR BUSINESSES)

Being prepared.

We all deal with change every day, in varying degrees. Change in technology, employees, clients, competition, in the world, and in our lives. But how do we, as individuals and business owners, prepare for sudden, massive change?

How can we prepare ourselves and our businesses for the kind of life-altering change that can happen to any of us in a heartbeat?

On August 29, 2005, the world changed forever for my company and me as Hurricane Katrina rolled over the city of New Orleans wrecking havoc on the lives and businesses of everyone. This guide was created to serve as a useful tool to help prepare you and your business.

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Winnie". The script is fluid and cursive.

Winnie Hart

President, Creative Director

The H Agency, A Strategic Design Agency

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THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:

Name:

Company:

Address:

Phone:

Cell:

E-mail:

WHAT'S INSIDE:



“Are you prepared?” Checklist



Contact List



Account List



Equipment Inventory List



“Go Bag” Checklist



Things to Consider



Action List



Notes

“ARE YOU PREPARED?” CHECKLIST

- Do you have emergency plans and procedures in place that would adequately address the potential hazards which could impact your business?
- Have you reviewed all existing plans and procedures to see whether they are in agreement as to outcomes and methods to achieve them?
- Do you have agreements with other organizations (e.g., suppliers of emergency equipment, general contractors and insurance carriers, etc.) to ensure their availability in the event of an emergency?
- Have you identified your company's most critical business processes?
- Have you taken steps to protect your building and other assets?
- Have you determined the financial and operational impact if your business shuts down for a day, a week or an entire revenue period? Is the impact minimal, serious, or catastrophic?
- Do you have emergency plans with your suppliers?
- Does the business have temporary relocation contingencies?
- Is the business adequately insured?
- Do you have back-ups for all vital records?
- Have you performed an assessment of short-term impacts vs. permanent impacts? Physical vs. human impacts?
- Are there procedures for your employees to report emergencies?
- Are there procedures to inform employees of the Emergency Action Plan and train them regularly in their roles?
- Are there procedures to notify employees in case of an emergency (e.g., alarm systems)?
- Are there evacuation and shelter-in-place policies and procedures in place?
- Are there procedures for staff in charge of emergency response?
- Are there procedures to account for employees and visitors?
- Does your business regularly update contact information? Is there a central business number employees can contact to confirm their safety and receive updated information?



“ARE YOU PREPARED?” CHECKLIST

- If your business is located in a multi-tenant building, have you coordinated with your building management’s emergency plans?
- Are Business "Go Bags" in place? (Have you determined what should be included in the "Go Bag"?)
- Are you appropriately insured for potential losses?
- Does your company have a diversification plan for supplies and inventory?
- Do you have an updated supplier contact list in your Business "Go Bag"?
- Do you have an updated customer contact list in your Business "Go Bag"?
- Do you have procedures in place to communicate to your suppliers and customers in times of crisis?
- Did you conduct a risk analysis to assess hazards that are most likely to affect each of your facilities?
- Are all employees familiar with the building’s emergency action plan? An employee should be aware of at least two exits from every room/area at the workplace.
- Are all employees familiar with the sound/signaling method of the fire/evacuation alarms?
- Are all employees familiar with the locations of the fire/evacuation alarms? Do they know how to use them?
- Are all fire exits accessible and obstacle free? Don’t lock fire exits.
- Are back-up systems and safety systems tested regularly (e.g., emergency lighting, communications systems, etc.)?

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CONTACT LIST

Name	Telephone / Alt. Number	E-mail / URL	Address
point person (outside of region)			
family member			
family member			
in case of emergency contact			
co-worker			
co-worker			
co-worker			
out of market vendors			
local vendor			
communications			
lawyer / law firm			
cpa / accounting firm			
local police			
local fire dept.			
local news media			
local newspaper			
local post office			
FEMA			
national and local Red Cross			
physician			
physician			
pharmacy			
medications (prescription number)			
medications (prescription number)			

ACCOUNT LIST

Company	Telephone Number	Account #	Due Date / Note
bank account			
emergency line of credit / cash flow			
credit card			
credit card			
cellular phone			
alt. communication (calling card, dif. area code cell, 800#, conf. call #, aim)			
IRA / 401K			
internet service			
cable tv			
electricity			
gas			
water			
alarm company			
rental property / landlord			
mortgage company			
car loan			
car insurance			
flood insurance			
business insurance			
health insurance			
safety deposit box			
storage facility			



“GO BAG” CHECKLIST

- employee list - includes home telephone and cell phone numbers
- list of building emergency numbers
- state & local emergency numbers
- cell phone w/ text capabilities
- desktop computer(s)
- laptop computer(s)
- monitor
- printer
- fax machine
- telephone / headset
- immediate back-up of computer records on external hard drive
- external hard drive / backup device
- digital camera
- portfolio (book & digital)
- software
- surge protector / extension cords
- usb / firewire cables
- power supply / batteries
- headphones / headset
- cds / dvds

- shipping labels (ex. FedEx)
- company checks and deposit slips
- insurance policies
- payables & receivables records - telephone numbers for all accounts

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THINGS TO CONSIDER

- time-off policy
- meeting points
- re-entry plan
- expenses covered
- job abandonment (employees)
- loss of clients
- planning meetings
- communications

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ACTION LIST

To Do

Date to Complete

Notes

1. review "Are you prepared?" checklist

2. make "Emergency Plan"

3. complete lists of info

4. back up vital work

5. pack "Go Bag(s)"

6. company drill

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THANK YOU

Winnie Hart is President and Creative Director of The H Agency, a strategic branding firm founded by Hart in 1990, with offices in New Orleans and Houston. She is known for her insight into the challenges of growing a successful small business in today's competitive creative environment.

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