Framework for professional skill development and implementation for business continuity

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ABSTRACT

In the recent large-scale disasters, economic losses including opportunity losses have been getting larger and larger addition to the hardware damages. This is because of the increases of complexities and interdependencies among socio-economical functionalities of our modern society especially in large cities. In order to survive and continue businesses or operations, organizations should have resilience which can be built with developing and implementing organizational professional skills for business continuity. This paper discusses about strategy building, design, development, implementation, evaluation and improvement of the professional skills with extracting skill requirements form existing professional certifications and trying to aggregate them in to an integrated core competence framework.

1. Research backgrounds and motivations

When an organization that is making efforts on business continuity management (BCM) starts considerations for developing and implementing professional skills in this fields into the organization, many difficulties will be found easily because of the current situations as described in the following sections. Those environment put many organizations into the difficult status to have motivations to acquire budgets and evaluate professionals and this will be resulted in inefficiencies and sometimes failures in responses to disasters and incidents that organizations will face.

1.1 Difficulties in developing BCM–related skills

Because there is no well-defined career-paths for the professionals in BCM field and many external training courses are available but with relatively narrow focuses, professionals tend to be isolated especially from management itself and to only have limited contributions. Actual professional assignments differ by organization by organization or position by position, this situation also makes BCM-related skills in an organization more difficult. (Fig.1)

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1.2 Difficulties for individual professionals to maintain certifications

Many professionals in BCM maintain several BCM certifications and others and this situation sometimes causes inefficiencies in maintaining the certifications and professional networks. (Fig. 2)

In order to make professional developments and implementations more efficiently in organizations, a comprehensive framework for professional skill sets is required and it should be along with criteria, levels for BCM-related professional skills.

2. An approach for developing framework under considerations

Based on the researches and analyses of existing training courses and professional development programs, an approach for BAM-related development framework in an organization in under considerations. (Fig. 3)
2.1 Potential input as a baseline criteria for professional skill developments

The two globally recognized NPOs (Non-Profit Organizations), BCI\(^1\) and DRII\(^2\), were mutually agreed in the principles for professional skill developments in the past and it is still worth to be a baseline for discussions to define criteria for professional skill developments in BCM fields. The principle had 10 criteria as below.

1. Initiation and Management,
2. Business Impact Analysis (BIA)
3. Risk Evaluation and Control
4. Developing Business Continuity Management Strategies
5. Emergency Response and Operations
6. Developing and Implementing Business and Crisis Management Plans
7. Awareness and Training Programmes
8. Maintaining and Exercising Continuity and Crisis Management Plans
9. Crisis Communications

2.1 Balance in capability development between organizational level and individual level

The organizational efforts to developments and implementations of BCM-related professional skills should be resulted in organizational resilience against incoming or future disasters and incidents. In order to make the efforts practical and efficient, an approach for balancing in capability development between organizational level and individual level. (Fig. 4)

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\(^1\) Business Continuity Institute (UK)
\(^2\) Disaster Recovery Institute International (US)
2.3 Expecting outcomes from the framework

From the professional skill development framework under the considerations, several outcomes that can be used in actual tasks in an organization are expected. (Fig.5)

![Figure 5. Conceptual chart for coverage in the area of building organizational resilience](image)

Conclusions

In order to make organizational efforts to be more resilient to incoming and future disasters and incidents, individual BCM-related skill development is critical and the proposed approach is worth to proceed development to clear the current difficulties in internal development skills at organization level and maintenance of certifications at individual level. In the process of the considerations, potential input for professional skill development criteria, balancing in capability development between organizational level and individual level, and expecting outcomes are discussed.

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References
