

Tabletop Exercises



Scenario 1 – Water Damage

PHASE 1

You are the owner of a small beauty salon, which has three employees, including yourself. On Saturday evening, after you have locked up and gone home for the weekend, an internal pipe running between the suspended ceiling and the floor of a flat above bursts. You arrive at the salon at 8.45am on Monday morning to discover water running down the walls and that the floor is ankle deep in water. The suspended ceiling has collapsed in places and in other places is sagging under the weight of the water. Much of the plaster has blown and fallen onto the floor. You find that the water running down the walls has damaged much of the equipment and stock that is stored in the salon, including the PC with customer details on. Some important paperwork has also suffered, including the diary of appointments. The electricity is not working. Your appointments diary is full for the week and your first customers are due shortly.

What would you do?

What should be your immediate priorities?

How would you contact your customers?

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PHASE 1

Possible answers:

- Important to turn the water off at the mains
- Important to turn the electricity off at the mains if safe to do so
- Call emergency services
- Call other staff

Think about:

- Do you have a Business Continuity Plan for situations such as this?
- Is your insurance cover sufficient for this type of incident?

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PHASE 2

It is now 9.15am and although the water has been turned off at the mains, there is still some leaking through the ceiling. A number of customers have arrived expecting their appointments, and the two other members of staff have also turned up. You find that the appointment book has been significantly damaged by the leak and you are finding it difficult to read the appointments for that day and the customers' details.

What would be your next steps?

What would you do over the next hour or so?

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PHASE 2

Possible answers:

- Check if your landline is still working
- Check if other utilities are still working e.g. gas
- Phone the customers who are booked in for appointments later that day explaining the situation, if you can find their details
- Put a notice on the front door explaining that the salon is closed due to a leak to prevent walk-in customers trying to access the building
- Contact your insurers

Think about:

- Do you have a back up copy of customers' details and phone numbers in case the original is damaged?
- Is there an alternative phone you could use if the landline is not working?
- Do you want your staff to stay on site or go home?
- How would you deal with customers who are phoning the salon? Do you need to record an answerphone message explaining the situation? How do you do this without electricity? How do you get your salon phone line diverted elsewhere?

PHASE 3

It is now 11.30am. A building inspector has arrived and is assessing the state of the building and the damage. Some structural damage has been caused and he informs you that customers and staff must not be allowed back into the salon until the property has been made safe again. This is estimated to take at least a week.

What steps would you take over the next week and beyond to deal with the situation?

What could you have done differently to prevent this situation affecting you as much?

PHASE 3

Possible answers:

- Inform all customers booked in for appointments in the next week of the situation and the fact they will not be able to come in for their appointments
- Inform the general public that they will not be able to use the salon facilities for the time being
- Try and set a date when the salon will officially reopen and aim for this
- Contact contractors to dry out the building and deal with the damage to it
- Contact suppliers to organise reordering of stock / equipment that has been damaged

Think about:

- Is there an alternative location that could be used during this interim period to hold any appointments? Do you have any back up equipment for this?
- How could you disseminate information to people – could you put signs up in the windows, send an email to customers if you have their email addresses, involve the local media by letting them run a story on the disaster or placing an advert?
- How can you ensure that your customers will return – will you want to run special offers or discounts when the salon reopens?
- Can you afford this loss of income? Do you have the necessary insurance to cover you?
- What will happen to your staff during the period of closure?
- How will this affect the reputation of your business? Will your customers want to return? How are you going to minimise any reputation loss that could occur as a result of this incident?

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