
How to Sell Business Continuity To Top Management

Robert Giffin (CBCP)
Director and Co-Founder, Avaluation Consulting



This Webinar Sponsored
by BSI Management Systems



Who is Avalution?

- A team of experienced professionals focused on helping organizations meet their business continuity objectives
- We help our clients get started, mature their programs and best-prepare for actual disruptive events
- Based on our clients' feedback, we deliver actionable results, eliminating unnecessary complexity and jargon
- Our process and work is flexible, efficient, effective and creative
- *We help companies prepare for BS 25999 Certification*

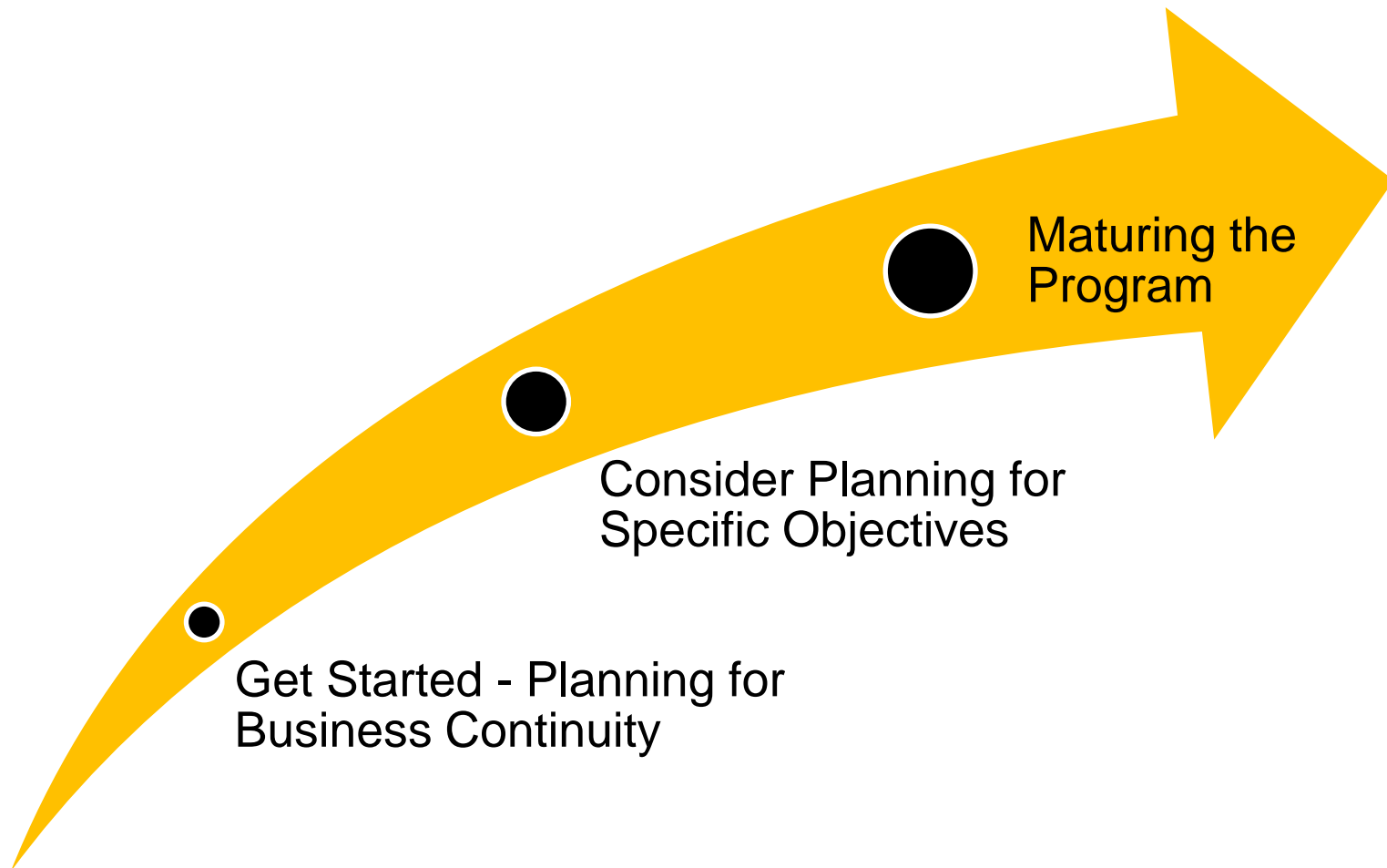
How To Sell BCM - Overview



- Differing Messages
 - The Initial Sales Pitch
 - The Ongoing Sales Pitch
- Symptoms of a Problem (Objections)
- Root Causes
- Solutions
 - Communication
 - Participation
 - Scope
 - Alignment
 - Knowledge
- Conclusions



Differing Messages (and Approaches) Based on Program Maturity



The Initial “Sales Pitch”



- Don't take an all or nothing approach to selling the need for business continuity
- At a minimum, advocate the need to understand the business risk associated with a disruptive event
 - Get buy in on conducting an analysis, then evaluate more definitive next steps

Key Consideration: Your Executive's Motivator(s)



- Fear
 - Financial loss
 - Market share loss
 - Reputational impairment
- Increased customer confidence
- Governance expectation
- “The right thing to do”



Analysis As A Driver

- Many organizations *just* use a BIA to figure out recovery objectives and ignore the Risk Assessment Completely
- A strong BIA/RA should articulate the need for BCM in each part of the organization.
 - Identifies the “Risk” that BCM will mitigate
 - Drives Scoping Decisions
 - Sets the table for BCM strategy discussions



The Next “Sales Pitch”

- Describe the value of continuing maturity
- How does business continuity (or risk management in general) contribute to management’s strategic objectives
- Outline the solutions and the resources necessary to get to the next level

Common Objections



“What do we need to do to meet this new regulatory requirement? We don’t want the ‘perfect’ program, just something to keep the regulators happy.”

Or

“One of our key customers just asked about business continuity. We don’t have much, so let’s just clean this up a bit to get them comfortable.”

Common Objections



“Business continuity sounds complicated - and expensive. This organization employs some very smart people. We’ll figure it out if something that bad happens.”



Common Objections



“I’m a Director of Business Continuity. Our program began due to an Internal Audit requirement, but now that this is a closed issue, the amount of management’s attention paid to our program is nearly gone.”



Root Causes

- The BCM team lacks of an understanding of:
 - What's strategically important to the organization
 - How the organization and its executive managers measure performance
 - Management risk tolerance
- A focus on reacting to crisis events, not preventing them
- Terminology that no one understands
- Failing to explain the importance and value offered by business continuity

Solutions



Based on observation and discussion with successful business continuity program sponsors, common solutions fall into five categories:

- Communication
- Participation
- Scope
- Alignment
- Knowledge

These recommendations apply to any stage of selling process

Solutions - Communications



- Use their language - avoid jargon
- Establishing a quantitative ROI is often impossible
 - A business-oriented BIA will help
- Create and perfect an elevator pitch that *speaks* to senior executives.
 - The initial pitch for beginning a program
 - The longer term pitch for maintaining a program
 - Short and long-term value to the business and its stakeholders

Solutions - Participation



- Are you involved in your organization's strategic initiatives?
- Demand senior management participation
 - And keep them interested!
 - Find a program sponsor that's well-respected, well-connected and understands the business
- Take credit!

Solutions - Scope



- Address everything?
 - Focus only on what's critical to meeting stakeholder expectations
- A balance between what we do normally as business continuity professionals – the reactive – with proactive risk treatments
 - Your business continuity sponsor understands the proactive side of the equation more!

Solutions - Alignment



- Align to:
 - Business strategy and strategic initiatives
 - Think less about the organization chart and focus on product and service delivery
 - Measure and prioritize using performance and current-state risk management metrics



Solutions - Knowledge



- Understand your organization's go-to-market strategy, how it delivers its products and services and key differentiators
 - Yes, you would think the BIA should cover this, but it often doesn't (in favor of focusing on and struggling with the development of impact estimates)





Conclusions

- Business continuity is often a hard concept to grasp and fully support – in particular with competing resource requirements
- “Win” support through alignment and involvement, and stay connected throughout the organization
- Initially, you will need to sell management on the idea that they may not know what’s at risk until they perform and accept an analysis
- Once an analysis is complete, these vetted conclusions become the driver for the rest of the program



Questions and Discussion



Contact Information



Robert Giffin

- Director and Co-Founder
- robert.giffin@avalution.com
- www.avalution.com
- 800.941.0381 (o)